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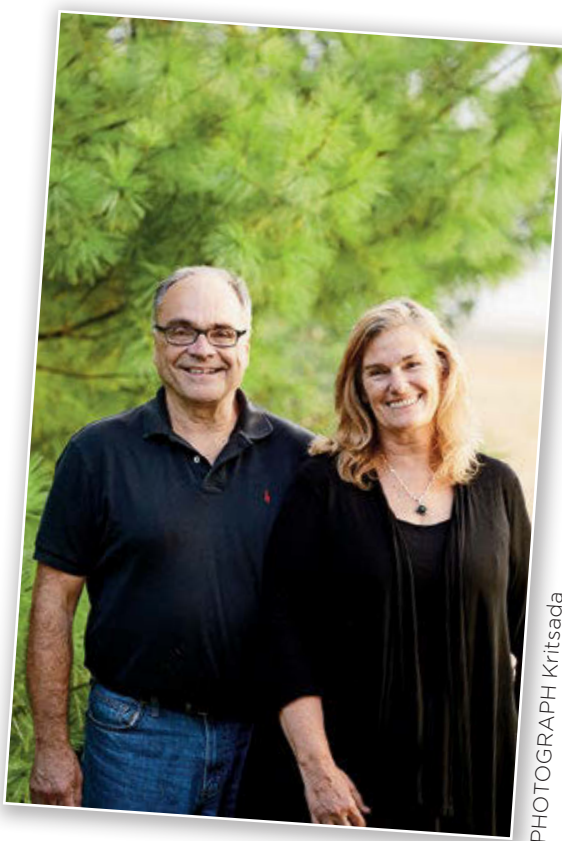
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pg sp15

Welcome

Although we don't paint, draw, or make sculptures, we like to think we're creative in another way: *we garden*. When you're a gardener, you paint with petals, splash the landscape with bloom-filled beds and borders, and transform empty spaces into works of art. And you can do it all so successfully with perennials!

For gardeners, this versatile plant group is like a painter's palette: so many colors, textures, and different flower options for each season. There are endless ways to combine perennials to create beautiful gardens, entryways, pathways, and containers. If you are yearning to express yourself in your garden, we hope the tips, photos, plans, and step-by-step instructions in this issue will help you cultivate your personal artistry.



PHOTOGRAPH KRITSADA

Doug & Karen

ABOUT OUR EDITORS

Doug Jimerson and Karen Weir-Jimerson have been writing about gardens for more than 30 years. They travel extensively, visiting gardens throughout the United States and Europe, and live and garden on three acres in rural Iowa. Take a tour of their gardens starting on *page 100*.

SPECIAL THANKS

We'd like to thank our art director, Brenda Lesch, who put the words and photos together with such creative skill, and our photo editor, Susan Ferguson. We'd also like to thank the photographers/illustrators who helped capture and celebrate the beauty and versatility of the perennials and gardens featured in the issue: Karen Chapman, GAP Photos, Miriam Goldberger, Saxon Holt, Justin Hancock, Doug Jimerson, Graham Jimerson, Lynn Karlin, Janet Loughrey, Jerry Pavia, Pete Krumhardt, Barbara O'Brien, Gary Palmer, Christina Salwitz, and Studio G. And special thanks go to the horticultural companies that grow the amazing selection of perennials for home gardens that have shared photos and plans for this issue: B&D Lilies, Bailey Nurseries, Ball Horticultural Company, Blooms of Bressingham, Bonnie Plant Farm, Costa Farms, Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm and Nursery, Monrovia Nursery, Plant Select, Schreiner's Iris Gardens, Suntory, Terra Nova Nurseries, and Wildflower Farm.

Perennial Garden Ideas

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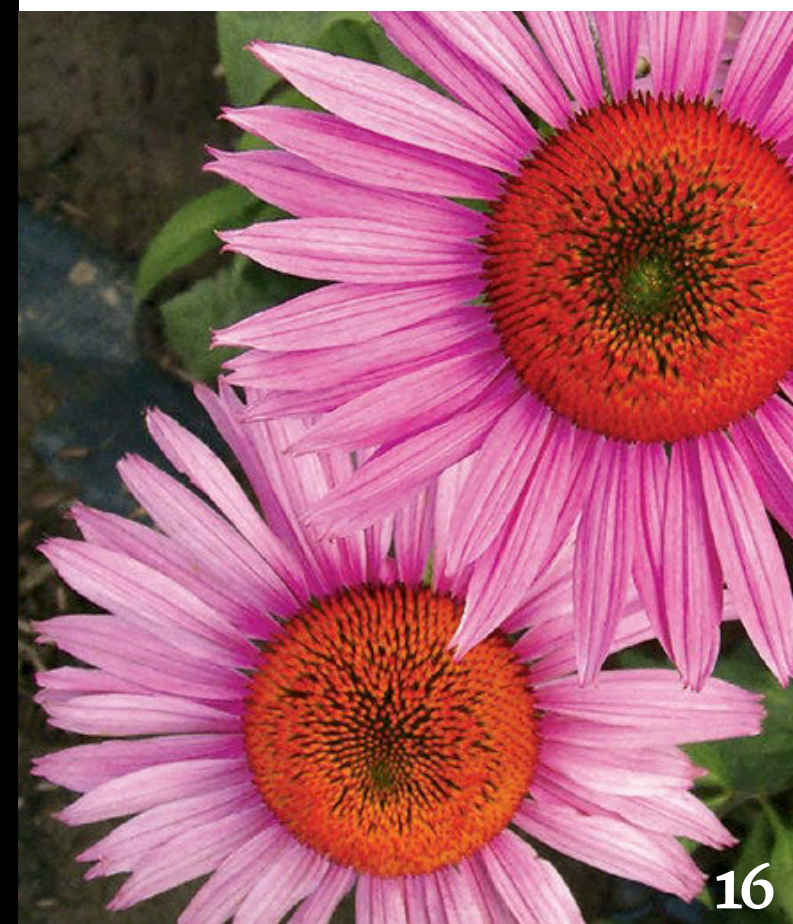
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On the Cover

Daylilies and phlox make a beautiful, low-maintenance, easy-care summer combo. Plus, they come back bigger and better every year.

in this issue



6 discovering perennials

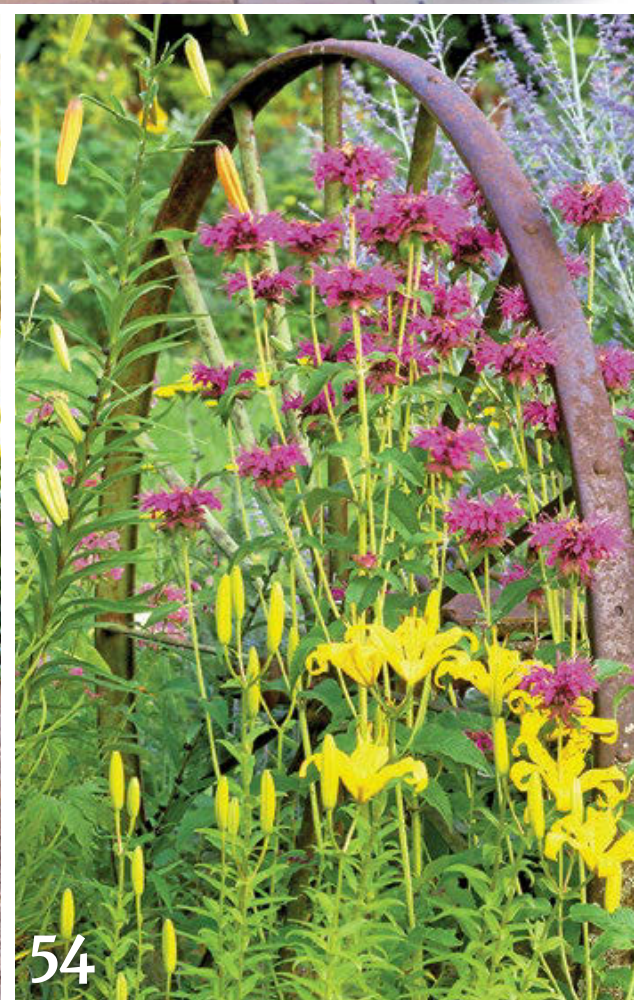
Get the garden of your dreams with easy-care and long-lasting perennial flowers. Discover how beautiful blooming and foliage perennials grow and which ones are the best choices for your yard and region.

18 perennial primer

Learn the secrets for creating a gorgeous garden. From choosing healthy plants to siting your garden to planting tips and long-term perennial care, you'll find everything you need to raise healthy perennial plants.

42 perennial garden designs

Designing a garden that fits your lifestyle and yard is easy when you follow some simple rules. Learn the elements of good garden design. Then try our custom garden plans in your yard.



74 perennials in containers

Perennials make gorgeous container plantings, giving you a wide range of flower colors and leaf textures. Our container recipes will show you how to make designer containers in just a few hours.

88 perennial lifestyles

Tour the gardens of perennial experts across the country: a Pacific Northwest garden designer, a wildflower expert and book author, garden shop owners in Wisconsin, and garden writers in Iowa.

110 must-have perennials

Meet the easiest (and most beautiful!) perennials for gardens and containers. This portfolio of popular species and varieties will help you select perennials you'll enjoy for years.



discovering perennials

Paint your landscape with easy-care plants



Plant summer bloomers, such as gaillardia, page 17



Mass perennials for big effect, page 10



Understand mini climates around your home, page 14

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WHAT IS A PERENNIAL?

Discover the unique characteristics of these versatile garden plants.

OPPOSITE Create a knockout garden by mixing ornamental grasses, flowering perennials, and shrubs.

PAGE 10

HOW TO USE PERENNIALS

Beds, borders, and containers: Perennials can brighten every aspect of the garden and landscape.

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PROBLEM-SOLVING PERENNIALS

Easy-care species can help with erosion, water restrictions, and more.

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KNOW YOUR CLIMATE

Understanding where you live will help you choose the best perennials for your yard.

PAGE 16

SEASONAL BLOOM

Choreograph a gorgeous garden of color by selecting perennials that shine in each season.

What is a Perennial?



Like old friends, perennials return every year, creating spectacular color.

LEFT Peonies are available in a variety of forms. Single-flower peonies, such as 'Sea Shell', offer sturdy, fragrant blooms.

OPPOSITE
A flower-rimmed pathway feels lush and inviting when planted with a mix of short-, medium-, and tall-blooming perennials.



DESIGN TIP

LONG LIFE SPANS

Perennials are in it for the long haul. Some varieties, however, are more long-lived than others. Sedum, for example, can last for years. Mums, on the other hand, may flourish for a year or two, then disappear. If you want a garden that you don't have to replant in a few years, choose species that have the longest lifespan. Some of the most long-lived include hosta, peony, iris, daylily, and phlox.

Talk about reliable! Most perennials bloom under a wide variety of conditions.

Plus, most are also extremely disease and pest resistant, so they need little regular care. Unlike annual flowers that die after the first frost, perennials go dormant over the winter, only to pop to life next spring, bigger and better than before. Perennials generally cost a little more than annuals, but they are well worth the investment because of their long lifespans (some peonies, for example, can bloom for decades). These rugged plants may take a year or two to get established, but after that they never look back. There is an old adage about perennials that says it all: The first year they sleep, the second year they creep, and the third year they leap.

SEASONAL BLOOM

Unlike annual flowers that are in almost constant bloom in summer, each perennial has a specific flowering period. Some, such as hellebore, bloom in the early spring, often while the snow is still on the ground. Others, such as chrysanthemum and aster, provide a fall finale of color. After blooming, most perennials won't flower again until the following season. The key to a colorful garden is to mix early-, mid- and late-season perennials together.



How to Use Perennials



Versatile (and beautiful) perennials can be used almost anywhere in your garden and landscape.



LEFT A pathway perennial garden transforms a barren space into an inviting and colorful tapestry of bloom.

OPPOSITE
A backyard border filled with perennials, such as 'Tall Pink' alstroemeria and 'Oranges and Lemons' gaillardia, is awash in color all summer.



SAY "TA-TA" TO TURF

A growing trend in landscaping involves removing your lawn and replacing it with easy-care, no-mow perennials. Low-growing species make a green carpet that looks as lush as lawn. Some species are treadable, so you can walk on them like grass. Try Scotch Moss (*Sagina subulata*), which grows in full sun. Blue Star Creeper (*Isotoma fluviatilis*) blooms with tiny blue flowers in spring.

BEDS AND BORDERS

Perennial gardening came into its own in the Victorian era, when garden designers such as Gertrude Jekyll popularized the custom of growing perennial flowers in long, carefully choreographed beds. Jekyll and other designers of her day developed the concept of mixing and matching plants of different heights and bloom times to create a tapestry of color throughout the growing season. Once transplanted to America, perennial gardens developed a looser, less regimented style characterized by blowsy, informal beds in a tangle of bloom.

Today, it really doesn't matter which style of perennial garden you prefer as long as you understand what each plant needs to succeed. Regardless of where you live (and how severe the climate!), you'll find a wide range of perennials that will flourish in your yard.

CONSIDER CONTAINERS

Perennials also grow well in containers. Just remember that each perennial only grows for a certain length of time, so to create a colorful container all summer long, you'll need to include spring, summer, and fall bloomers. Or, pack your containers with foliage plants such as hosta, heuchera, stachys, and variegated iris. When the summer is over, transplant the perennials into your garden and enjoy them next year.



Problem-Solving Perennials

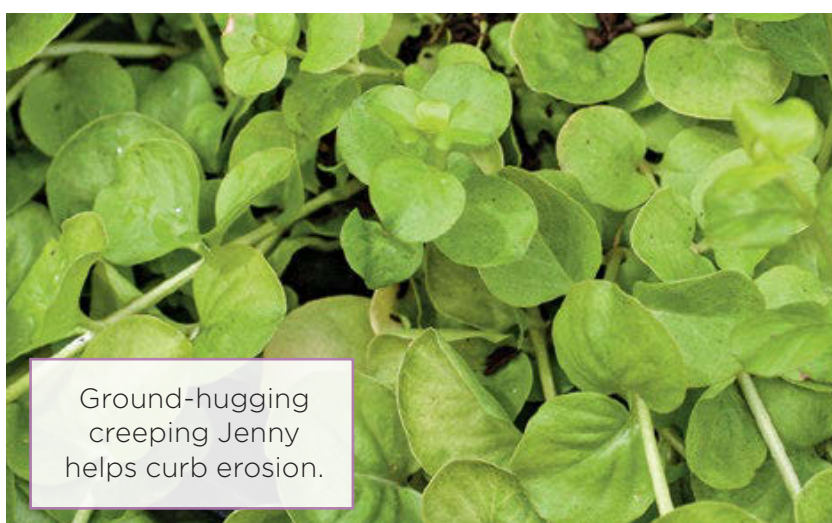
There are a number of perennials that can not only make your yard a place of beauty but can also fix tough landscaping problems.



Everyone's yard is different!

If you have a wooded lot, you can't grow plants that need sun. But that doesn't mean you can't garden; it just means you need to grow shade lovers. If you have problem soil, you can amend it, use raised beds, or you can plant perennials

that are adapted to your soil. Perennials are problem solvers! And there is a wide variety of perennials suited to many gardening conditions. Here are common landscape challenges and perennial solutions:



Ground-hugging creeping Jenny helps curb erosion.

PROBLEM: SLOPE EROSION CONTROL

GARDEN SITUATION: You have a sloping yard that ruts out after big rains.

SOLUTION: Add quick-growing perennial creepers such as Vinca, Ajuga, ivy, and creeping Jenny.



Red-hot poker thrives in hot, dry garden spots.

PROBLEM: TOO MUCH SUN

GARDEN SITUATION: You live in a hot, sunny climate and your yard has little reprieve from the sun.

SOLUTION: Install perennials that love those hot, sunny spots. Try Helenium, Sedum, and red-hot poker.

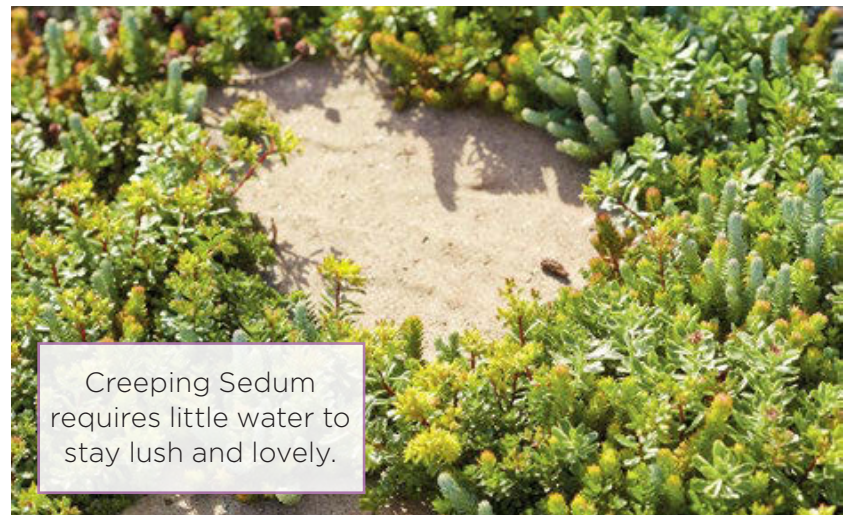


Heuchera and Tiarella turn on the lights in shaded spots.

PROBLEM: TOO MUCH SHADE

GARDEN SITUATION: Your yard has lots of mature trees and your garden is all shaded.

SOLUTION: Shade-loving perennials to the rescue! Try a mixed bed of Heuchera, Tiarella, and ferns.



Creeping Sedum requires little water to stay lush and lovely.

PROBLEM: WATER RESTRICTIONS

GARDEN SITUATION: Your neighborhood has water guidelines (or you just want a more sustainable garden).

SOLUTION: Choose perennials that aren't thirsty. Use heat-loving Sedum groundcovers in pathways. Or try cacti and catmint, which also can take the heat.



Use wet-loving perennials to drink up excess water.

PROBLEM: SOGGY LOW SPOT

GARDEN SITUATION: You have a yard that gathers water at the base.

SOLUTION: Build a rain garden! Create a funnel for water to flow to the low spot and plant wet soil-loving plants to drink up the extra moisture.



PERMEABLE PAVING

If water runoff is a concern in your yard, leave some space between stone pavers (and then fill it in with gravel so weeds don't grow) so rainfall can seep into the soil below.

Know Your Climate

Every yard is different! Learn about the growing conditions in yours before you plant.

To choose the right perennials for your landscape, you need to know about the climate in your region—as well as in your own backyard.

YOUR ZONE

Every region of the country has its own growing conditions. Summer and winter temperatures, rainfall, humidity, and wind all affect which plants will grow best in your yard. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) created a map based on winter temperatures that helps gardeners choose the most reliable plants for their yard and climate by zones. To see which zone you live in, simply refer to the Zone map on *page 144*.

A hot spot on the south side of a house is an ideal growing area for heat- and drought-resistant perennials such as daylilies and alliums.

YOUR YARD

Once you’ve determined what zone you live in, your next step is to identify what microclimates you have in your yard. Slopes, trees, and even buildings can affect different parts of your yard in different ways. For example, if you have a garage that is shaded on its north side, this will create a colder, darker microclimate than the sunnier south side of the building. No single species can grow in both places.

Microclimates offer specific gardening opportunities for the zone-pushing gardener. For example, if you live in Zone 5, you may have south-facing, protected areas where plants hardy to Zone 4 can live. Planting outside of your zone is always a gamble, but it is one that many eager gardeners are willing to take.



Look for your zone on the plant tag before buying.

In addition to zone hardiness, plant tags will also specify other planting requirements and care.



Hosta
'June'

Height:	15" (40cm)
Space:	20" (50cm)
Light:	Part Shade to Full Shade
Zone:	3-9
Blooms:	Midsummer to Late Summer
Features:	Every garden needs a Hosta 'June' to shine in the shade. This multiple award winner forms a stunning clump of leaves with wide, blue-green margins and chartreuse to gold centers. Pale lavender blue flowers. Lovely in containers.
Care:	Easy to grow and adaptable to most soils, but prefers moist, organic soils. Best in partial to full shade; protect from harsh afternoon sun.
Pair with:	Solomon's Seal, Coral Bells, Astilbe, Violet, Bleeding Heart, Lungwort, Ferns

For more information:
www.PerennialResource.com

*This perennial will
beautify your garden
year after year.*



Select perennials based on zone and light requirements. This pathway includes shade-loving hosta, ferns, Japanese forest grass, and hydrangea.

Blooms By The Season



Choreograph perennial bloom times to create an ever-changing show of color and texture in your garden.

Your garden will change color as the season progresses. In general, cool colors prevail in springtime, then give way to hotter hues in summer. As the summer garden fades, fall bloomers provide a bold finale. Include spring, summer, and fall bloomers in your garden to ensure non-stop color all season.



Ornamental grasses and shrubs, such as red-leaf barberry, add interest in all seasons, creating a color bridge before and after perennial flowers bloom.

SELECT PERENNIALS BY BLOOM TIMES

Each season offers a wide selection of flowering and foliage plants to use in your garden. Here are some seasonal favorites that you can combine in beds, borders, and containers.

SPRING BEAUTIES



Peony Enjoy fragrant blooms in late spring/early summer.



Iris Loved for their iridescent color and unique flower shape, irises bloom in a range of hues.



Hellebore The nodding blooms of this cool-weather plant grace shaded spots in the garden.



Moss Phlox This low-growing phlox smothers the ground in a carpet of pink, white, and fuchsia.

SUMMER SENSATIONS



Echinacea 'Ruby Giant'
Beautiful purple coneflower with large orange center.



Leucanthemum 'Snowbound'
Grow a mass of cool white blooms that also make ideal cut flowers for summer bouquets.



Gaillardia Also known as blanket flower, this sunny beauty adds yellow and orange color to borders and containers.



Garden Phlox Fragrant and petal-packed, garden phlox blooms in pink, red, and white.

FALL FAVORITES



Mums Classic autumn flower ideal in gardens or containers.



Russian Sage Blue clouds of bloom color this tall perennial. A pollinator favorite.



Aster Plant in mass to enjoy the biggest blast of color. Monarchs love this flower!



Sedum 'Marina' Colorful flowers on rosy stems, blooms August and September.



Create a beautiful border by layering your favorite perennial bloomers. In this garden, trailing cranesbill geranium is backed by the upright spikes of blue salvia, lupine, wallflower, and iris.

perennial primer

From seedstarting to staking, here's everything you need



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Planting is easy, page 22



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Get perennials from nurseries, mail-order companies, and plant swaps.

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Seeds, pots, bareroot: Perennials are sold in many forms.

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Where you plant your garden determines its success.

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BUILDING SOIL

If you don't have perfect soil, no worries. You can create ideal soil.

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GROWING FROM SEED

The most economical way to grow perennials is also really easy.

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PERENNIAL PLANTING

Discover easy steps for planting potted perennials for instant impact.

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FERTILIZING, WATERING

Feed and water your perennials to grow robust plants.

PAGE 36

MULCHING, DIVIDING

Keep perennials in top shape with these easy-care techniques.

PAGE 40

PERENNIAL PESTS

What's eating your plants? Find out here.

Tips for Buying Perennials



You can obtain perennials from many different places—
at local garden centers, mail order companies, or plant sales.

SHOPPING FOR PLANTS

With your garden plan in hand, head to your local garden center or big box store. There you'll find a dizzying assortment of perennials. Most stores organize their plants by light requirements, so look for groupings of sun and shade lovers.

Perennials are generally sold in a variety of pot and plant sizes. If you are looking for a value, smaller plants are generally the least expensive; they adapt quickly after planting and grow quickly. When



ABOVE Some perennials, such as hostas, come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Read the plant tag to find the right one for your garden.

RIGHT Look for perennial partnerships while you shop. In this photo, blue salvia and white daisies are an obvious color match.



you plant larger perennials (those that come in 1- or 2-gallon containers), you get instant impact because the plants are often already in bloom. But the size of perennial plants you select depends not only on your budget but also on the amount of plants you need to fill your planting area.

SHOPPING TIPS

When shopping for perennials, here's some advice:

● **Avoid wimps.** Look for vigorous and stocky plants.

● **Pick plants in the pink.** Choose plants with healthy foliage (avoid plants with dead, yellow, or otherwise diseased-looking leaves).

● **Look for buds.** Don't worry if the plants are not blooming yet. Look for plants in bud, because you'll be able to enjoy their blooms in your garden for longer. Perennials have their own season of bloom, so just because they aren't showing color at the garden center doesn't mean they won't provide color in your garden later.

Buying Mail Order

If you're looking for a specific perennial variety you can't find locally, check online sources. Mail-order nurseries have experience in shipping plants directly to your door. Plants may come bareroot or potted, but they will adapt quickly to your garden. Keep in mind that generally plants that come to you through the mail may be smaller than what you can find in your local nursery; therefore, they may take an extra year to grow to full size. For the discerning perennial fan, mail-order nurseries can be the ideal way to find unusual varieties. Most mail-order gardening companies sell through online sources as well as catalogs. Some states, such as California, may have restrictions about what species can be shipped into the state.



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Forms of Perennial Plants



From seeds to potted plants, perennials come in many forms (and price tags).

SEEDS

Seed packets are sold in garden centers, farm stores, nurseries, and through mail-order companies.

Pros: Growing perennials from seed is the least expensive way to raise perennials. If you want a large quantity of a certain type of perennial, growing from seed can be very cost effective.

Cons: Seeds take varying amounts of time to germinate; you also may need a greenhouse or grow lights. Plants need to grow large enough to transplant into your garden.

BAREROOT

Perennials sold through mail-order companies can come to you in bareroot form. This means that the plants are sent partially dormant without soil around the roots.

Pros: Dormant plants are ready to go. Plant them directly in the garden and they'll put on new growth quickly.

Cons: For newbie gardeners, bareroot plants may be intimidating. You need to soak the roots in water and plant immediately.

POTTED PLANTS

What you see is what you get with container-grown perennials. They are ready to plant and you can create an instant garden.

Pros: They are ready to plant and can be easily transplanted into larger containers or into the ground.

Cons: Many potted perennials are sold in full bloom because they are more appealing to shoppers. But since perennials generally only bloom once a year, you won't have as much time to enjoy them.

ON-SALE PLANTS: WHAT'S A VALUE?

Look for on-sale perennials at the end of the season. If they've grown in small pots all summer, they may be leggy, but they are still a value. If you buy them during really hot weather, pot them up in larger containers, then plant them in late summer/early fall when the weather isn't so brutal. Fall-planted perennials can establish good root systems that will help them overwinter. When they come back next spring, they'll look great!

TOP The most cost-effective way to grow perennials is from seed. It takes a little longer, but you can produce a large quantity of your favorite varieties.

ABOVE Some perennials, such as bearded iris, are sold or shipped in bareroot form. Just soak them in water and plant them.



When purchasing plants, start off with healthy ones and inspect the root systems as well. Buy perennials in as large a size as you can afford. When you plant large perennials, you get an instant-impact look.

Siting Your Garden



Deciding where to put your garden is an important element for its success.



If you have a steeply sloping backyard, consider terracing it. Here, low-growing catmint and landscape roses create a carpet of color all summer.

Raised Bed Gardens

One of the easiest ways to create a successful perennial garden is to plant in a raised bed made of timber, brick, or stone. Here's why:

- Raised beds warm up earlier in the spring.
- They offer better drainage for plants.
- You can fill them with improved soil mix.
- They are easier on your back because you don't have to bend so far to weed and water.

LOOK AT THE LIGHT

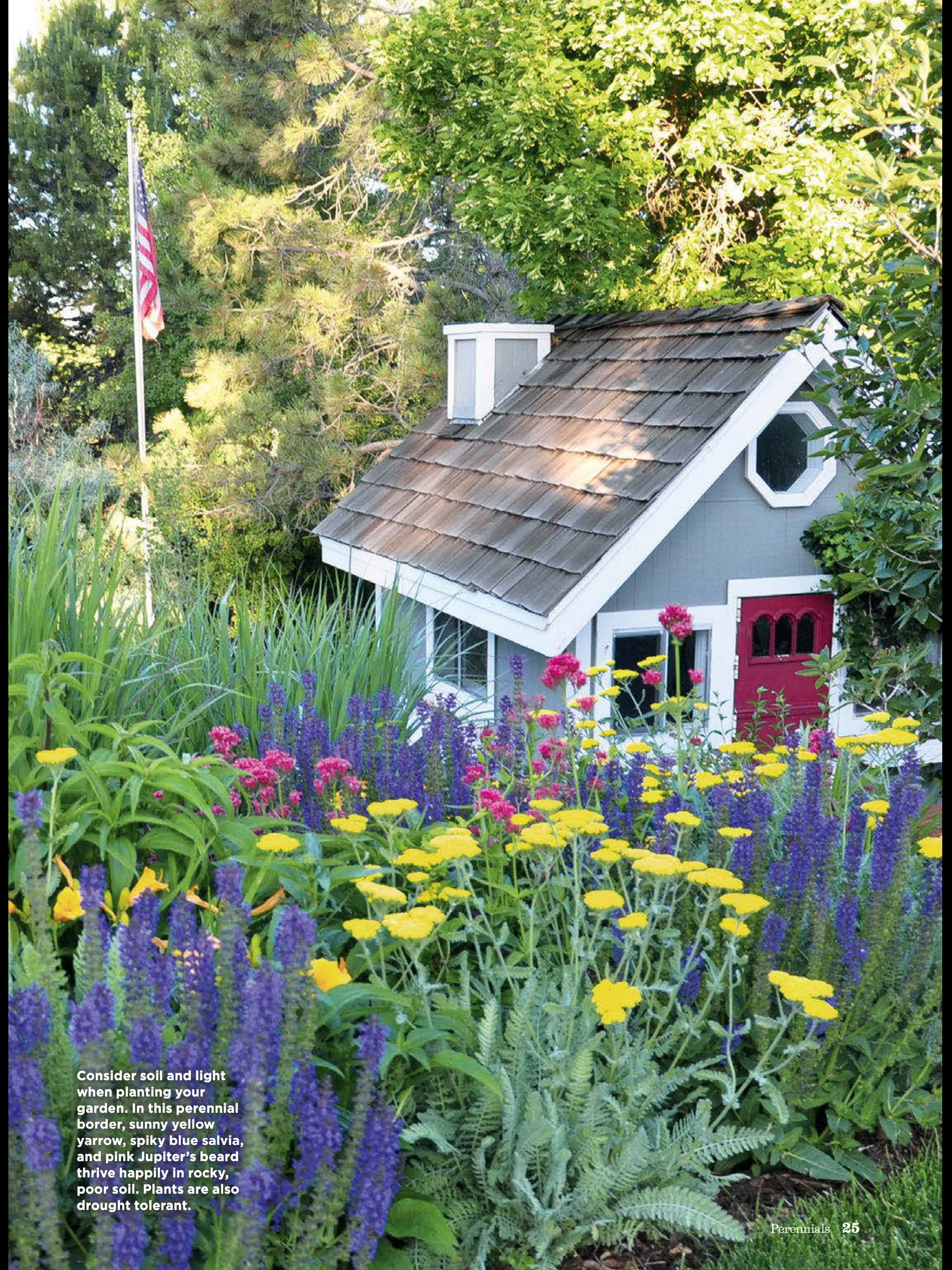
Perennials are generally broken into two categories: sun and shade. Sun-loving perennials generally require at least 6 hours of sun daily to thrive. If your garden receives less than 6 hours of sun a day, plant shade dwellers that grow best in dappled light or deep shade. No matter what type of light conditions you have in your yard, you can still have a colorful perennial border.

CHECK THE SOIL

Like Goldilocks, most perennials don't like soil that's too wet or too dry. They want it just right. To check a site for drainage, use a spade to dig a hole. If the area is muddy (or the hole fills with water), it may be a problem site for some perennials. Likewise, a garden that is very rocky or sandy may need additional organic matter to help plants grow.

THINK ABOUT AIR FLOW

Lack of air flow can cause some perennials to develop fungal diseases. Site your garden in a well-ventilated area with good air flow.



Consider soil and light when planting your garden. In this perennial border, sunny yellow yarrow, spiky blue salvia, and pink Jupiter's beard thrive happily in rocky, poor soil. Plants are also drought tolerant.



Building Soil

The key to every great garden starts with soil. Here are some tips to improve yours.

Soil varies greatly in different areas of the country and may even vary in different places in your yard. For example, you may have clay soil if you live in a new housing development. Frequently, the topsoil of an area is removed in order to build a house and it isn't replaced. Or, you may live in an area of the country where the soil is very sandy. Ideally, soil should be loose and friable, so that water can percolate easily to the root zones of the plants. Regardless of the type of soil you have, you can always improve it. Adding several inches of organic material, such as compost, rotted manure, grass clippings, or shredded leaves, will go a long way to improve even the poorest soil. Plus, the organic matter will help retain moisture in the soil, as well as adding valuable nutrients. Spring and fall are the best times to amend your soil.



CARE TIP

THE DIRT SQUEEZE TEST

What kind of soil do you have? You can find out

very quickly with a hands-on method called the squeeze test.

1. Take a trowel and dig a hole in the soil where you want to site your garden.
2. Grab a handful of soil.
3. Make a fist with the soil and open your hand. Here are the soil options:

CLAY: If the soil in your hand forms together to make a ball, you have clay soil.

SANDY SOIL: If the soil falls apart, you have sandy soil.

LOAMY SOIL: If the soil is still crumbly and soft, you have loamy soil.



Beef Up Your Soil

Improve your soil when it is slightly moist to the touch.

Here are three steps to soil improvement:

MATERIALS

- Garden fork
- Garden rake
- Soil amendments

1. TURN THE SOIL.

Use a garden fork to break up and turn over the soil in your planting area.

2. ADD ORGANIC MATERIALS.

Soil rich with organic materials will produce healthier plants. If you have heavy clay soil, add layers of organic matter over the soil's surface and rototill or spade it into the top 6 inches. Sandy soil can

be improved with generous doses of organic matter and/or fresh topsoil.

3. RAKE SMOOTH.

Use a garden rake to level the surface of the soil. The rake will also help break up large chunks of compost. Hand-pick out weeds, rocks, and debris. Your soil is now ready for planting!



Adding organic matter to soil before planting ensures a successful garden. Here, lysimachia and hypericum shine in the front of the garden, with waves of purple nepeta and wallflowers flanking the path.

Growing From Seed



Starting perennials from seed is an inexpensive way to get more plants.



After your seedlings develop their second true set of leaves, transplant them into larger pots filled with potting soil.

How to Start Seeds

With a little time and a few materials, you can start a perennial garden from seed.

MATERIALS

- Soilless seed-starting mix
- Plastic trays or flats
- Seeds
- Water

1. FILL THE TRAY.

Pour soilless mix into the flat and press gently to firm the soil.

2. PLANT THE SEEDS.

Use a pencil to make a shallow planting hole in each section of the flat. Drop a seed or two into each hole and cover lightly with soil.

3. WATER WELL.

Use a watering can with a fine spray to water the newly planted seeds.



SEED STARTING: TOP TIPS

● **PLAN AHEAD.** Start perennial seedlings 10 to 12 weeks before your last frost date. That way, they will be ready to plant in the garden at the right time in spring.

● **GIVE THEM THE RIGHT LIGHT.** Set your planted seed tray under a grow light for 12 to 14 hours a day. Place the light just a few inches above the surface of the soil.

● **KEEP WARM.** Seeds germinate best in warm soil. You can use a heat mat to warm them from below.

● **MOISTEN WELL.** To help keep the soil from drying out, cover the seeds with plastic wrap until they germinate. Remove the plastic as soon as you see new growth.

● **BE PATIENT.** Most perennial seeds will germinate in three to five weeks. Generally, not all the seeds in a packet will germinate, so it's best to plant more than you need.

● **GET READY TO PLANT OUTDOORS.** When seedlings are large enough to plant in your bed, harden them off outdoors. Set in a protected location during the day and bring them in at night for about a week.

PLANTS THAT WILL FLOWER THE FIRST YEAR

Some perennials are so vigorous that they'll bloom the first year from seed. Here's a list of some of these over-achieving varieties.

'Lady' Lavender



Bouquet Dianthus



'Rising Sun' Coreopsis



Cheyenne Spirit Echinacea



'Sun Up' Coreopsis



Luna Hibiscus



Arizona Gaillardia



'Anne Greenaway' Lamium



Ballerina Gaura



'Super Blue' Lavender



Planting and Staking



Planting perennials is easy! We'll show you how in several simple steps.

Before you plant, arrange potted perennials on the ground to determine best placement. Then get digging!

PLACEMENT COUNTS

When planting a new border, or adding a plant to an existing one, determine the mature size of the perennial before adding it to your garden. The height of the plant will dictate where you place it, but the width of the plant is equally important. If your plants are spaced too close, they will eventually grow into each other. The key is to create partnerships, not competitors, when you plant. Check the plant tag for the mature height and width of your plants. Overcrowded perennials are also more susceptible to pest infestations and diseases such as mildew.

STAKING PERENNIALS

When planting tall perennials such as lilies, think about staking them right after you plant them. That way, they will grow tall and straight, and won't flop over on top of other plants in front of them. There are several types of stakes:



STRAIGHT STAKES: Insert metal or bamboo next to the plant. Use loose string to attach to plant stems. For a country or cottage garden, you can use natural stakes such as branches.

CIRCLES: Circle supports work best for floppy, shrubby plants such as peonies.



Plant Potted Perennials

Just pop them out of the pots and plant!

MATERIALS

- Potted perennials
- Trowel or spade
- Water

1. PREPARE THE BED.

Rake the area to smooth the soil. Remove rocks, branches, and weeds; break up soil clods with the back of the rake head.

2. DIG A HOLE.

Dig a hole just a bit larger than the root ball of the plant. The plant should sit in the ground at the same depth it was growing in the pot.

3. REMOVE PLANT FROM POT.

Squeeze the bottom of the pot or gently tap it on the ground to help loosen the soil around the root ball. Turn the pot on its side and gently

remove the plant from the pot.

If the root ball is a solid mass, tease the roots apart before planting; this encourages the development of new roots. Place the plant in the hole and fill around the edges with soil.

AFTER-PLANTING CARE

Tamp down the soil around the plant to fill in air holes. Water newly planted perennials thoroughly. Add several inches of mulch on top of the soil around the plants; this helps retain soil moisture. Keep well watered until plants are established.

You can plant a whole
bed in just an afternoon
when you use larger
perennials. Just plant,
mulch, and admire!



Fertilizing



Feed your plants and they will reward you in marvelous and colorful ways.



A well-fed landscape is a healthy landscape that is also more resistant to insects and disease.

Feed & Forget

Fertilize your perennials the easy way. Here's how:

1. Choose a slow-release granular fertilizer. There are many brands to choose from.
2. Sprinkle the granules around the base of the plants. Make sure that you evenly distribute them. Don't allow them to bunch up because that may deliver too much fertilizer to one area of the plant.
3. Replenish according to label directions.

Like every other organism on earth, plants need to eat. They take up nutrients through their roots and leaves, which offers several different ways in which you can feed your perennials—adding fertilizer to the ground or foliar feeding. The good news is that most perennials don't require a lot of fertilization (unlike annuals, which are heavy feeders).

FERTILIZER BY THE NUMBERS

When you buy packaged fertilizer, it comes with a series of numbers on the label. These numbers tell you the ratio of nutrients. The three important ingredients on the label are N-P-K (Nitrogen- Phosphorus- Potassium). They are listed on every fertilizer label in three numbers, such as 30-10-10 or 10-5-5. The numbers always indicate the ratio of N-P-K. For example, in fertilizer that is 30-10-10: This means that if you had 100 pounds of that fertilizer, 30 pounds would be nitrogen, 10 pounds would be phosphorus and 10 pounds would be potassium (potash). (The remaining 50 pounds are inactive ingredients that give the fertilizer bulk, making it easier to spread.)



ABOVE Granulated fertilizer releases nutrients to the soil over time. It comes in a wide range of formulas.

BELOW After you sprinkle fertilizer around your plants, use a trowel to mix it into the top inch or two of soil.



CARE TIP

TEST YOUR SOIL

Your soil may be super productive and need little fertilizer. Or, it may be lacking in some important nutrient. How do you know? Do a soil test. You can get a kit from most garden centers or university extension services. Soil tests are inexpensive (from a couple bucks to around \$25, depending on the service). A test will help you determine what fertilizer formulations to use. You may find out that your soil is in healthy shape and no fertilization is necessary.



FERTILIZER FACTS

The best way to fertilize your garden is by using organic materials. By adding nutrient-rich compost, rotted manure, and even grass clippings, you help build beneficial soil microorganisms that are key to plant health. However, granular and liquid fertilizers are useful for giving your garden an additional source of nutrients, especially if you have poor soil.

Nitrogen creates green leaves and promotes plant growth. Phosphorus and potassium enhance fruit, flowers, and plant roots. Together, all three are essential elements of your perennial garden's diet.

Use a fertilizer that has a balance of all three elements, such as 5-10-5. The best time to feed your plants is in early spring, just as they are putting out new growth.

Because perennials aren't heavy feeders, don't overdo it. The Cornell University extension service recommends using a low-nitrogen fertilizer in early spring and then again in 6-week intervals.

FOLIAR FEEDING

Some gardeners prefer to feed their plants with a liquid fertilizer sprayed on the plants' foliage. This provides faster results, but it must be done more frequently.

Watering Basics



Water is an essential element for a healthy garden. When rainfall is scarce, you'll need to step in and give your garden a drink.

The good news is that your perennial garden is one of the least thirsty spots in your yard. Most perennials, for example, need less water than your lawn or your vegetable garden. That's because perennials are engineered to survive wet and dry periods. Since they come back every year, perennials have developed an adaptability to most weather patterns and extremes.

In dry areas of the country, water is at a premium. Even if you live in a region where water is plentiful, why waste it? Here are several things to consider when watering your perennial garden.

CHOOSE DROUGHT-TOLERANT VARIETIES

To lessen the need to water your garden, select varieties that are naturally drought resistant. In fact, some perennials don't need water for weeks at a time. Most of these plant species have evolved over time in areas of the world where rain is scarce, such as prairie and desert locations. Some examples include coneflowers, coreopsis, sunflowers, sedums, and sages. If you want a less thirsty garden, avoid species that need more frequent watering.

GROUP BY WATER NEEDS

Cluster plants in groups or drifts based on their moisture requirements. That way, you don't have to irrigate your entire garden. If you are growing perennials in containers, pair up those with similar watering needs.

WATER DEEPLY

Whenever you water, make sure to thoroughly soak the soil. This will encourage your plants to develop deep root systems that are more resistant to drought. Frequent light waterings encourage the development of shallow roots that dry out faster.



RIGHT Water perennials, such as lady's mantle, in the morning to allow the leaves to dry during the day. This helps prevent fungal diseases.



WATERING WISELY

Soaker hoses and drip irrigation systems deliver water to perennials where they need it the most: at the root zone. These watering systems also use less water and minimize erosion. Overhead water systems, such as sprinklers, are less efficient because water flying through the air is subject to evaporation. There are drip irrigation systems that you can add to your containers too.

CONSERVE WATER

Mulching your garden is one of the best ways to conserve soil moisture. Adding several inches of shredded bark, pine straw, or chopped leaves will preserve soil moisture and add needed nutrients to your soil.

HOW MUCH TO WATER?

Most perennials do best when they receive about an inch of water a week. Watering your garden in the morning is most efficient because the temperature is cooler and there will be less evaporation. Here are some methods to measure water in your garden.



Rain gauge

A rain gauge allows you to measure rainfall in your garden so you can withhold or add more water as needed. Make sure to empty it after every rain in order to get a correct reading.

Timer

If you irrigate with a soaker hose or drip irrigation system, install a timer to regulate the amount of water you give your plants. This allows you to water your borders while you are away from home as well.

Coffee can

It's low tech but effective. If you use a sprinkler or spray from the garden hose, set a coffee can in the garden to measure the amount of water that the bed is getting.



Mulching Your Garden



Covering the soil around your perennials helps conserve moisture, reduces weeding, and adds nutrients to your garden.

If you visit a public garden, one of the first things you may notice is that most of the soil is hidden under a layer of mulch. That's because professional gardeners know the benefits of mulching.

Most mulches are organic in nature and will break down over time, improving the soil as they decompose. Organic mulches include shredded bark, compost, peat moss, pine straw, even grass clippings. Or, you can apply a more permanent mulch, such as pea gravel or lava rock. Here are some of the top benefits of using mulch in your garden.

CONTROLS WEEDS Weed seeds can't germinate without sunlight. So any weed seeds that float into your yard or are sleeping in your soil will not be able to germinate.

BENEFIT: Mulch eliminates (or greatly reduces) the need to weed your garden.

CONSERVES SOIL MOISTURE Because soil dries out faster when exposed to wind and sunlight, mulch helps lock in soil moisture.

BENEFIT: Mulch helps conserve soil moisture so you don't have to water your garden as often.

IMPROVES GARDEN SOIL Over time, organic mulches will break down, adding valuable nutrients to your garden.

BENEFIT: Mulch helps to passively fertilize your garden and improve the soil.

Use mulch in the garden the way you use wall-to-wall carpeting in your home. Place it everywhere, making sure crowns are not buried.



**SEASONAL
TIP**

MULCH VS COMPOST

Compost is organic matter rich in humus, formed from decomposed plant remains and other organic matter that is incorporated into soil. Mulch is a material applied in a layer to the soil surface to suppress weeds, conserve moisture, and maintain cool, uniform root temperatures.

MENU OF MULCHES

These mulches each have their own look, texture, and benefit. Use mulches that are readily available in your area to keep costs down.



PINE STRAW

This Southern favorite offers a lovely russet color and fine texture. It is fluffy and easy to apply.



SHREDDED BARK

Used in landscapes to help unify garden elements, shredded bark comes in a variety of colors.



PINE CHUNKS

Large-size chunks last longer than shredded bark. Pine chunks come in a variety of colors.



LEAVES

Easy to apply and free (if you have trees!), leaves offer a natural winter mulch. Use whole or shredded.



COMPOST

Called black gold, this mulch offers a dark, uniform color and super nutrient value.



PEAT MOSS

Provides good aeration and holds water. Peat moss doesn't compact and lasts for years.



PEA GRAVEL

Small-size gravel makes a permanent mulch and adds nice texture. It comes in many colors.



LAVA ROCK

Lava rock is available in red, brown, and black hues. It is a permanent mulch and will not break down.



SHELLS

Ideal for perennials in pots. Adds a beachy feel. Make sure to wash thoroughly to remove salt.



Daylilies and
rudbeckia may
need dividing every
two or three years.
Watch for dieback
or lack of blooms
to tell you when
division is needed.

Dividing



Most perennials need to be divided every couple of years. Not only does this make the plant healthier but it also pays off in more plants.

Established and healthy perennials eventually come to a point in their lives when they need to be divided. Some perennials, such as peonies, won't require division for more than a decade. Others, such as chrysanthemums or ornamental grasses, need to be dug up and separated every year or two. Division is also a way of propagating plants.

SIGNS PLANT NEEDS TO BE DIVIDED

Your perennials will tell you. They will indicate by their growth that it's time to be divided.

1. CENTER DIEBACK. One clue is that the center of the plant starts to die. For example, ornamental grasses, iris, and chrysanthemums will slowly turn brown in the center when they need to be divided. There will still be a circle of growth around the browning center.



DIVIDE BEFORE FROST

Divide plants in early spring or autumn. If you're in a cold climate, divide plants at least 6 weeks before the first expected frost in your area. This gives new perennial divisions time to establish strong root systems before the ground freezes.

2. LACK OF BLOOMS. Another way a plant tells you it's division time is that it will slow down or totally stop bearing flowers. For example, the leaves of peonies and daylilies will look healthy, but the plants will produce less blooms.

THE BEST TIME TO DIVIDE

Perennials are best divided in two seasons: very early spring when they are just breaking dormancy or late summer after they have stopped flowering. Don't divide plants when they are forming flower buds or are in full bloom.



Divide & Conquer

It's plant math: You divide to multiply!

MATERIALS

- Spade
- Sharp knife
- Scissors or pruners

1. DIG THE PLANT.

Use a garden fork or sharp spade to dig a circle around the plant. Leave as much soil around the roots as possible. Insert the spade under the root ball to separate the plant from the soil.

2. LIFT THE PLANT FROM THE GROUND.

Lift entire plant out of the ground and set it onto a potting bench where you can cut it up easily.

3. CUT INTO DIVISIONS.

Use a sharp knife to cut the root ball into small sections; make sure each piece has several sets of leaves and attached roots.

4. TRIM BACK FOLIAGE.

Cut away excess leaves and replant the new divisions immediately.

Controlling Garden Pests



Perennials don't have too many pest problems, but there are a few unwanted visitors that can spoil your garden if not caught early.



LEFT Snails can do a lot of damage in a short amount of time. They prefer succulent, broad-leaved perennials such as hostas. If you see round holes in the leaves, you've probably got snails or slugs.

RIGHT Invite the green, black, and yellow caterpillars of Black Swallowtail butterflies into your garden by planting their favorite foods: parsley, dill, fennel, and carrot.



There's nothing more disheartening than discovering your favorite perennials have been devoured by hungry pests. The good news, though, is that most insects are host specific. This means that they have evolved to dine only on a specific plant species and will ignore the flowers nearby. So, if you plant a wide variety of flowers in your garden, you'll be less likely to lose everything if a population of insect pests comes calling. Slugs and snails are less discriminating in their tastes, but they generally won't dine on hairy-leaved or aromatic perennials such as artemisia or catmint. Four-legged pests such as rabbits and deer are probably capable of doing more damage than any other creatures. Strong measures are required to keep them at bay.

SMALL-SCALE PESTS

Keep in mind that there are almost as many beneficial insects as there are damaging ones. And some, such as praying mantis and ladybird beetles, survive by making a meal out of their nastier cousins. That's why it's important to never spray insecticides in your garden. All you'll do is kill the good bugs along with the bad ones. Buy an insect field guide so you can identify any suspicious characters in your garden. You might be surprised to find out they are helpful, not harmful.

TAKE CARE OF THE GOOD GUYS

Not all insects in your garden are pests. For example, all butterflies start life as lowly caterpillars. Black Swallowtails' larvae sport black-and-green stripes; you'll find them dining on your parsley, fennel, dill, or carrot plants. To encourage swallowtails in your garden, add extra parsley plants to your borders to feed their young. Monarch butterfly larvae dine exclusively on plants in the milkweed family. Other beneficial insects to protect include praying mantis, ladybird beetles, lacewings, and bees.

However, if you do discover a population of insects devouring your garden, consider using a biological control such as insecticidal soap. You'll find it at most garden centers, and it's safe enough to use even on vegetables. For harmful caterpillars (learn to identify beneficial butterfly and moth larvae), use a biological control called *Bacillus thuringiensis*. It's a naturally occurring bacterium that is easy to spray on plant leaves. The caterpillars ingest the material and die.

For slugs and snails, remove any flat stones or boards that they might be hiding under during the day. You can also trap them by setting out a shallow pan filled with stale beer. The slugs are attracted to the beer and will crawl in and drown. To control individual slugs, sprinkle salt over them and they'll dry up and die. There are also organic slug and snail baits you can use.

LARGE-SCALE PESTS

There are a number of larger animals that may view your garden as a meal. A good fence is generally the best solution for avoiding animal damage. Deer require tall fences that are at least 6 feet high. Small-diameter mesh fences will keep rabbits out of vegetable gardens. There are also scare devices that may deter animals. These are motion sensitive and may startle, spray water, or sound a loud noise to scare off hungry interlopers. Repellents work with varying degrees of success but have to be applied often and after each rain. To keep woodchucks from



burrowing into a garden, it's recommended to bury wire fencing (such as chicken wire) up to a foot deep to keep these marauders out of garden areas.

If you live in an area that is especially prone to damage from large grazing animals, you can also deter their dining experiences by planting plants they simply don't like. In general, deer and rabbits are a lot like insects and tend to avoid pungent and fuzzy-leaved perennials. For example, the velvet foliage of Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*) and artemisia varieties aren't palatable to deer.

ABOVE Even though they send shivers down the backs of many gardeners, spiders are some of the most beneficial creatures you can have in your garden. This Yellow Garden spider can even take on large prey such as grasshoppers.

LEFT Japanese beetles are nasty and hard to kill. They'll swarm your garden and make mincemeat of roses, hibiscus, and other bloomers. Handpick when possible. For larger populations, spray with Neem oil or a pyrethrin-based insecticide.

Find the perfect focal point for your garden. Here, an urn doubles as a fountain.



perennial garden designs

Create the garden of your dreams



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PLACEMENT AND COLOR

Where you plant is as important as what you plant.

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VISUAL ASPECTS

Discover 5 key things you need to know to create visual interest.

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LANDSCAPE PARTNERS

Perennials need a little help from their friends: bulbs, shrubs, trees.

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SEASONAL PAIRINGS

Plant continuous color when you pair up perennials for every season.

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COMBINING COLOR & SIZE

Planning a garden is not all about color. You have to consider plant size.

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Plant a garden that matches your style and interests.

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PERENNIALS INDOORS

Use perennials as indoor decor for parties and special occasions.

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8 GARDEN PLANS

Check out our easy-to-follow planting plans to create a custom-designed garden in your own yard.

Garden Effects: Layers & Color Themes



A perennial garden is a growing work of art. With careful planning, you can enjoy a garden that looks lush and lovely in every season.

There are some things to consider before designing your perennial garden—and they all depend on what look you want to achieve. What's your style? Do you love the wild, blowsy look of a cottage garden? Or do you want something more buttoned down and formal? Are you interested in a romantic garden that's as fragrant as it is colorful? Or, do you want to create a private respite for yourself or entertaining? Whatever your garden goals are, here are some design principles to keep in mind.

GET A LAYERED LOOK

Perennials come in a wide range of heights. Ground-hugging perennials, such as moss phlox or ajuga, barely grow more than 6 inches tall. Others, such as hardy hibiscus and Oriental lily, can grow over 6 feet tall. To show off all the charms of your perennials, stage your border by including short, medium, and tall varieties in the same bed. Keep in mind that different varieties within species can attain varying heights. For example, phlox and lily include varieties of dramatically different heights. The plant tag will tell you how tall each plant will grow.

COORDINATE COLORS

Create a beautiful garden or landscape by teaming perennials that bloom in complementary colors. If you like a pastel look, choose perennials that flower in blue, pink, and white. For hot, splashy borders, select perennials that flower in red, yellow, and purple. Amp up the color by planting perennials in large drifts or clumps. Create continuity throughout the border by repeating the pattern. And don't overlook foliage. Leafy lovelies such as hosta and heuchera are more prized for their pretty leaves than they

are for their more modest flowers. The big design advantage to foliage plants is that your garden and landscape look good all season. Many foliage plants come in a wide range of gorgeous colors and can rival flowers for attention. Plus they can bridge the gap between seasonally blooming perennials.

CHOREOGRAPH BLOOM

Unlike annuals that flower all summer long, perennials have their own season of bloom that can last from a few days to several weeks. That's why, if you want nonstop color, you need to include a mix of spring-, summer- and fall-blooming varieties in your garden.

Some perennials, such as peony and baptisia, are one-hit wonders; they put on a spectacular flower show in the spring, then regroup for next year's bloom. But other perennials stage colorful comebacks throughout the season. Coneflower, gaillardia, nepeta, black-eyed Susan, scabiosa, and yarrow are perennials that bloom off and on from spring through fall. To enjoy the most color in your garden, include seasonal and repeat bloomers.



DESIGN TIP

ADD ANNUALS TO SUN & SHADE

Because perennials come in and out of bloom, include a generous helping of annuals in your garden to keep the color from ebbing. As with perennials, you want to choose annuals with complementary colors and sizes. Here are top annuals for sun and shade:

SHADE-LOVING ANNUALS

- Impatiens
- Begonia
- Coleus
- Torenia
- Caladium

SUN-LOVING ANNUALS

- Petunia
- Geranium
- Salvia
- Marigold
- Zinnia



Annual flowers, such as impatiens and fuchsia, pair well with romantic perennials such as foxglove.

5 Keys to Successful Garden Design



Create the garden of your dreams using easy-to-achieve design elements.

In addition to plant placement and color choreography, there are other tenets of garden design.

CONTRAST

Contrast creates a visually interesting garden. Contrast is defined as comparison of objects to show off differences. You can create contrast in the garden through color (putting dark colors next to light ones) or through shape (pairing small-leafed plants with large-leafed ones). For example, planting a chartreuse-leafed Heuchera next to a chocolate brown one creates contrast through color. The light green hues stand out against the dark color.

TEXTURE

Another way to create contrast in a garden is through varying texture. For example, in a shade garden, the smooth, heart-shaped leaves of Hosta look stunning with lacy ferns planted next to them. Or large, fuzzy-leaf plants, such as lamb's ears, add soft texture to any bed. Ornamental grasses are another good source of texture in borders and containers, and they come in various heights.

REPETITION

Create a sense of continuity in your garden by repeating plants and flower colors. For example, several drifts of blue Salvia planted throughout a garden will create a sense of organization and drama. Repeating plant types (such as spiky Astilbe flowers in a shade garden) or colors (such as bright yellow Coreopsis along a garden pathway), provides a unified look.

FOCAL POINT

A garden should have a focal point to provide a sense of destination or a place where the eye can rest. Focal points can be comprised of many different types of objects or plants. A tree in the center of a garden, a fountain, an arbor—these all make excellent focal points.

SCALE

Varying the size of the plantings in your garden helps create scale. A tall perennial, such as Heliopsis, looks beautiful when teamed with a lower-growing yellow bloomer such as Rudbeckia. The Rudbeckia's shorter stature helps accentuate the height of the Heliopsis, creating scale.



DESIGN TIP

LEAD THE EYE

Create dimension in your garden using one or more of these objects as a focal point.

OBELISK

A tower, tepee, or obelisk adds a tall architectural element to a garden.

ARBOR

An arbor or arch can also be planted with a beautiful climbing perennial such as Clematis.

BENCH

A bench in any style is beautiful (and useful!). Placed at the end of a path, it gives the garden visitor a destination.

GAZING BALL

The reflective quality of a gazing ball can make a garden feel bigger.

CONTAINER

An urn or container planted with perennials or a small tree can serve as a centerpiece in a garden.

FOUNTAIN

A gurgling fountain adds a focal point and also the joy of sound through water.

Focal points can serve many purposes. Here, an oversized ceramic fountain adds color, structure, and sound to the garden.



Landscape Partners

To create a gorgeous landscape, team perennials with trees, shrubs, and bulbs to boost seasonal color and interest.

Variety is the spice of life (and your garden).

Perennials can't go it alone in the garden and landscape. That's why it's important to plant an assortment of different types of plants that will add height, structure, and texture. Trees (both large and small) add height, a focal point, and

can provide an environment for plants that grow below. Shrubs fill in the blanks in landscapes, featuring flowers and colorful leaves. Hardy flowering bulb species bloom from spring through fall, complementing perennials.

TREES

Low-growing trees add a tall element to the garden as well as shading the ground beneath.

FLOWERING BULBS

Plant showy summer bulbs such as canna to add foliage and flower color to borders.



DESIGN TIP

GET COLOR IN WINTER

Plant species that shine while the garden sleeps. Red twig dogwood has shiny red branches; paperbark maple sports interesting bark; and cork-screw willow looks like wild sculpture in winter.

TREES: Acting as focal points and anchors, trees offer more than height and shade. Choose species with seasonal appeal that includes flowers, berries, fragrance, and fall color. Some trees, such as birches, offer interesting bark in the winter.



SPRING BLOOMS

Crab Apples produce single and double flowers followed by bird-loving berries in summer.



SUMMER FLOWERS

Crape Myrtle These Southern icons offer bundles of flowers all summer.



FALL LEAF COLOR

Maples Turn on the lights in your landscape with the fiery fall foliage of maple trees.

SHRUBS

Shrubs add year-round color and texture. Try barberry, which has red, purple, or light green leaves.

SHRUBS: From low-growing to taller types, shrubs offer a wide range of leaf colors and textures, as well as gorgeous seasonal flowers. Shrubs can be mixed with perennials in borders and gardens, or used as a hedge to create a wall of foliage and flowers.



SPRING FRAGRANCE

Lilac Romantic and old-fashioned, lilacs perfume the garden and bloom in lilac, white, purple, blue.



SUMMER FLOWERS

Hydrangea Giant blooms smother these shrubs. Flower color includes white, pink, blue, purple.



FALL HIGHLIGHTS

Serviceberry Beautiful trees offer garden treats: flowers in spring, berries in summer, leaf color in fall.

BULBS: Hardy flowering bulbs are great mixers in perennial gardens. They provide a rainbow of colors and creative flower forms. Plus, many are eager spreaders (called naturalizing) and will return year after year.



SPRING RISERS

Daffodils Also called narcissus, they have trumpet-shape flowers.



SUMMER BLOOMS

Allium Blooming in early summer, allium produces big round blooms.



FALL SURPRISE

Hardy Fall Cyclamen These little beauties bloom in pink, rose, and white.

All-Season Show

Creating a flower-filled perennial garden all year long is a little like putting on a stage show.

A petal-packed garden is everyone's dream. The key to success is to carefully choreograph plant combinations that put on the best show during spring, summer, and fall so your garden is never out of bloom. In addition, you should mingle low, medium, and tall combinations for each season.

PLANT PAIRINGS FOR EACH SEASON

1. Choose three perennials for each season.
2. Choose a partner for each perennial and plant the combinations.

SPRING

● Peony + Allium



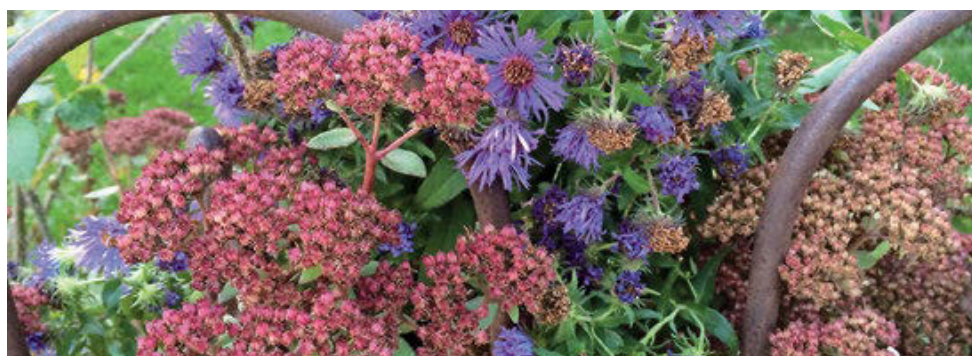
SUMMER

● Rose + Clematis



FALL

● Aster + 'Autumn Joy' Sedum



PHOTOGRAPHS Left: Doug Jimerson; Opposite: Janet Loughrey DESIGN; Opposite: Phil Thornburg, Winterbloom

Aid continuity in your border by planting perennials that bloom at the same time in drifts or clumps repeated throughout the garden.

TALL

Plant perennials, such as *Verbena bonariensis*, in the back of the border where it can tower over shorter flowers.

MID-SIZE

Medium height perennials, such as purple coneflower, add color in the middle of a bed.

LOW-GROWERS

Use short perennials, such as cranesbill geranium, in the front of the border.

Perennial Palettes: Plants by Color & Height



In your garden, you want colors that are pleasing to you and that complement each other. But you also want to plant them where you can see them. Use this plant-inspired color wheel by height to help you select plants that work together in the garden.

WHITE FLOWERS

White goes with everything and provides a refreshing break from bright colors.

- 1. Low-Growing:** Candytuft
- 2. Medium:** Peony
- 3. Tall:** Japanese anemone

YELLOW FLOWERS

When paired with blue, yellow is a cool color. When paired with red, it heats up.

- 4. Low-Growing:** Saxatilis
- 5. Medium:** Coreopsis
- 6. Tall:** Rudbeckia

ORANGE FLOWERS

Add a little sunshine in your garden with orange flowers. They pair well with red, blue, and purple.

- 7. Low-Growing:** Gaillardia
- 8. Medium:** Daylily
- 9. Tall:** Kniphofia

RED FLOWERS

Red adds sizzle to any setting. Pair with other bold colors such as yellow and orange.

- 10. Low-Growing:** Penstemon
- 11. Medium:** Oriental poppy
- 12. Tall:** Hardy Hibiscus

PINK FLOWERS

Pink plays a starring role in old-fashioned, cottage, and Victorian gardens. Pair with blue, white, and lavender.

- 13. Low-Growing:** Dianthus
- 14. Medium:** Phlox
- 15. Tall:** Oriental lily

PURPLE FLOWERS

Purple screams for attention, so that's why it's a good companion for quiet colors such as white and grey.

- 16. Low-Growing:** Campanula
- 17. Medium:** Salvia
- 18. Tall:** Coneflower

BLUE FLOWERS

Cool blues pair well with white, gray, pink, and yellow.

- 19. Low-Growing:** Nepeta
- 20. Medium:** Siberian iris
- 21. Tall:** Baptisia

GRAY FOLIAGE

Silver- and gray-leaved plants complement any color, making every hue look even more vibrant.

- 22. Low-Growing:** Lamb's ears
- 23. Medium:** Sedum
- 24. Tall:** Artemisia

GREEN

The base color for a garden, green plays an important role in tying all the other colors together.

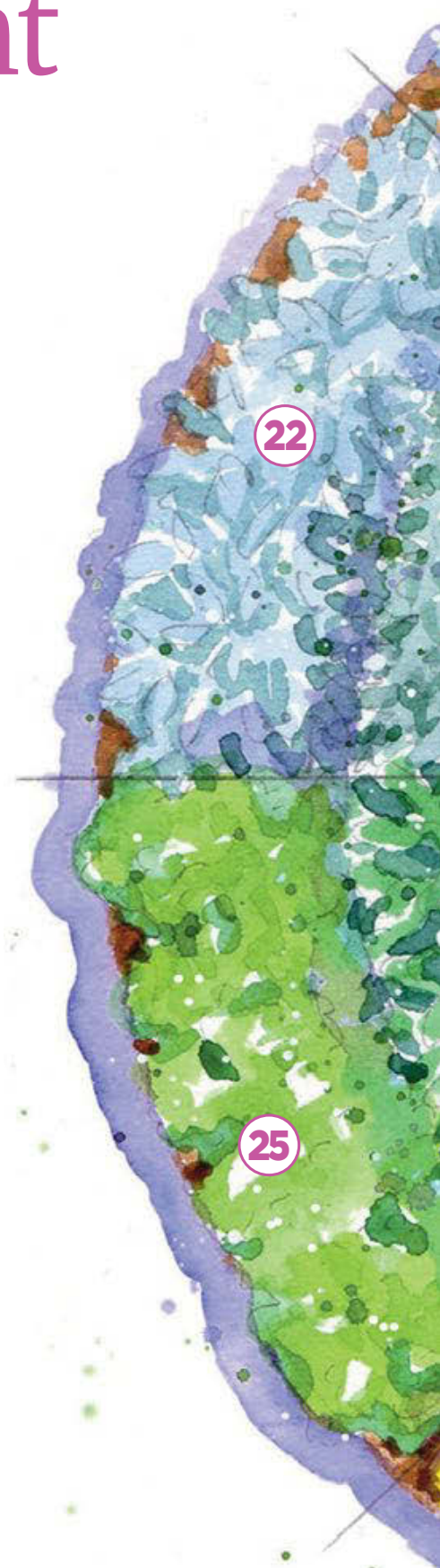
- 25. Low-Growing:** Lady's mantle
- 26. Medium:** Hosta
- 27. Tall:** Ornamental grass 'Karl Foerster'



DESIGN TIP

STRIKING A BALANCE

Complementary colors are located opposite each other on the color wheel. Complementary garden color plants bounce color off each other, making them more intense.





COLOR WHEEL FOR PERFECT PLACEMENT

Designing your garden is a lot like designing your home. You want to keep complementary colors in mind as you choose a color scheme. But you also want to keep perennial heights in mind. Pale colors need shade as a backer to get the greatest visual effect, while brilliant colors need full light to be most effective.

Perennial Garden Styles



When planning your garden, choose a style that complements your home's architecture and your personal interests.

A perennial garden can be a way to connect your outdoors to your interior space. For example, if your house is decorated in a traditional style, a well organized formal garden carries the theme outdoors. But if you prefer country style decorating, a cottage or dooryard garden might be just the ticket. Perennial gardens can also support your hobbies or interests. If you are a crafter, choose a garden filled with flowers that dry well or can be used to create wreaths or potpourri. If you love fresh flower bouquets, plant a cutting garden. Here are different types of perennial gardens to consider.

TRADITIONAL/FORMAL

Traditional gardens are steeped in history and still adorn estates and palaces. But, they can be scaled down to fit a suburban yard. These gardens are symmetrical and usually feature a central path or axis through the garden.

Types of plants: boxwood (for small edging hedges), standards (such as tree forms of hibiscus or hydrangea)

Types of accents: paths, urns, benches

COTTAGE /DOORYARD

Almost the opposite of a formal garden, a cottage garden places its emphasis on color and texture rather than order. Cottage gardens features lots of plants, lots of flowers, and a casual look, rather than a buttoned-up one.

Types of plants: roses, hydrangeas, rudbeckia

Types of accents: colorful containers, painted furniture, whimsical décor

BUTTERFLY AND BIRD GARDENS

Create a haven for birds and butterflies with nectar-rich perennial flowers. Add host plants for butterflies too.

Types of plants: hummingbirds like red, trumpet-shape blooms, such as salvia and trumpetvine; butterflies flock to coneflower, buddleia, and aster

Types of accents: add bird feeders (seed and nectar) and a water source such as a birdbath to your garden

CRAFTER GARDEN

Plant a perennial garden to grow your own ingredients for live and dried flower wreaths, potpourri, sachets, and fabric dying.

Types of plants: daisies, roses, calendula, lavender

Types of accents: drying rack, containers

HERB AND FLOWER GARDEN

Herbs are a super way to add flavor to your meals without calories or fat! Perennial herbs thrive in full sun and can be grown in containers. Make your own herbal teas, meat rubs, and dried herb blends.

Types of plants: sage, thyme, chamomile, lovage, rosemary (in warm climates)

Types of accents: sundial, bee skep

STARS OF A CUTTING GARDEN

Plant a perennial border with long-lasting cut flowers. Combine perennials that bloom at the same time so you can make mixed flower bouquets; they are elegant table centerpieces and make lovely gifts!



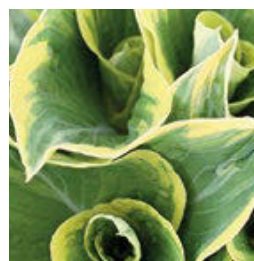
Salvia
Beautiful blue spires



Baptisia
Blooms in yellow or blue



Peony
Long-lasting, fragrant flowers



Hosta
Colorful leaves make great foils



Phlox
Cottage garden favorite



In a country-style border, beebalm, lilies, and Russian sage are right at home.

Perennial Punch Indoors



Although perennials aren't houseplants, they can play starring roles for special occasions; then plant them in your garden for years to come.

Step into a garden center or nursery, and you may be dazzled by blooms that look as beautiful as in a florist's boutique. Many of these flowers, regardless of season, are actually perennials for your yard. Because consumers like to see things in bloom when they buy, plant growers accommodate that need. When you buy a perennial in full bloom, chances are (unless it is a recurring bloomer), this flush of beautiful bloom will be it for the year. Because

most perennials bloom just once a year, you can capitalize on the flowers now by using them for indoor decorating.

Weddings, showers, graduations, and birthdays are all occasions in which a flash of flowers indoors is appropriate. So why not get two uses from your perennial plant purchases: Use them indoors as party decorations and then plant them in your garden to enjoy for years to come.

Most perennials—even sun-loving ones—can take a few days indoors. Here are some tips for using perennials for indoor décor.

- **Drop and decorate.** Just drop the black plastic grower's pot into a larger container such as a basket or terra-cotta pot. Disguise the soil with a generous fluffing of Spanish moss.
- **Water before you bring indoors.** Water perennials in their pots, and allow them to drain well before bringing them indoors. Their soil will stay moist enough to keep them healthy for a few days indoors.
- **Pack multiples into containers.** Create large floral arrangements by simply inserting several plants into a large container. To give one plant more height, set it on an overturned pot within the pot, then surround the sides with large leafy plants such as ferns.
- **Mix shade lovers and sun worshippers.** Create combos indoors that would not flourish in the garden. For example, pair hostas (shade lovers) with daisies (sun lovers).
- **Harvest the blooms.** Why pay for cut flowers when you can get double duty from blooming perennials. For example, buy lilies in bloom, then simply snip off the flowers for bouquets; plant the perennial in the garden. Snipping off the flowers will not affect the plant.
- **Make perennial "terrariums."** Set a blooming perennial under glass, such as in a jar or a cloche.
- **Group perennials with houseplants.** Make a colorful vignette in a corner using palms, dracaena, and alstroemeria.

PHOTOGRAPHS Costa Farms



Brighten a brunch with spring-blooming perennials, such as salvia, lily, and woodland phlox.

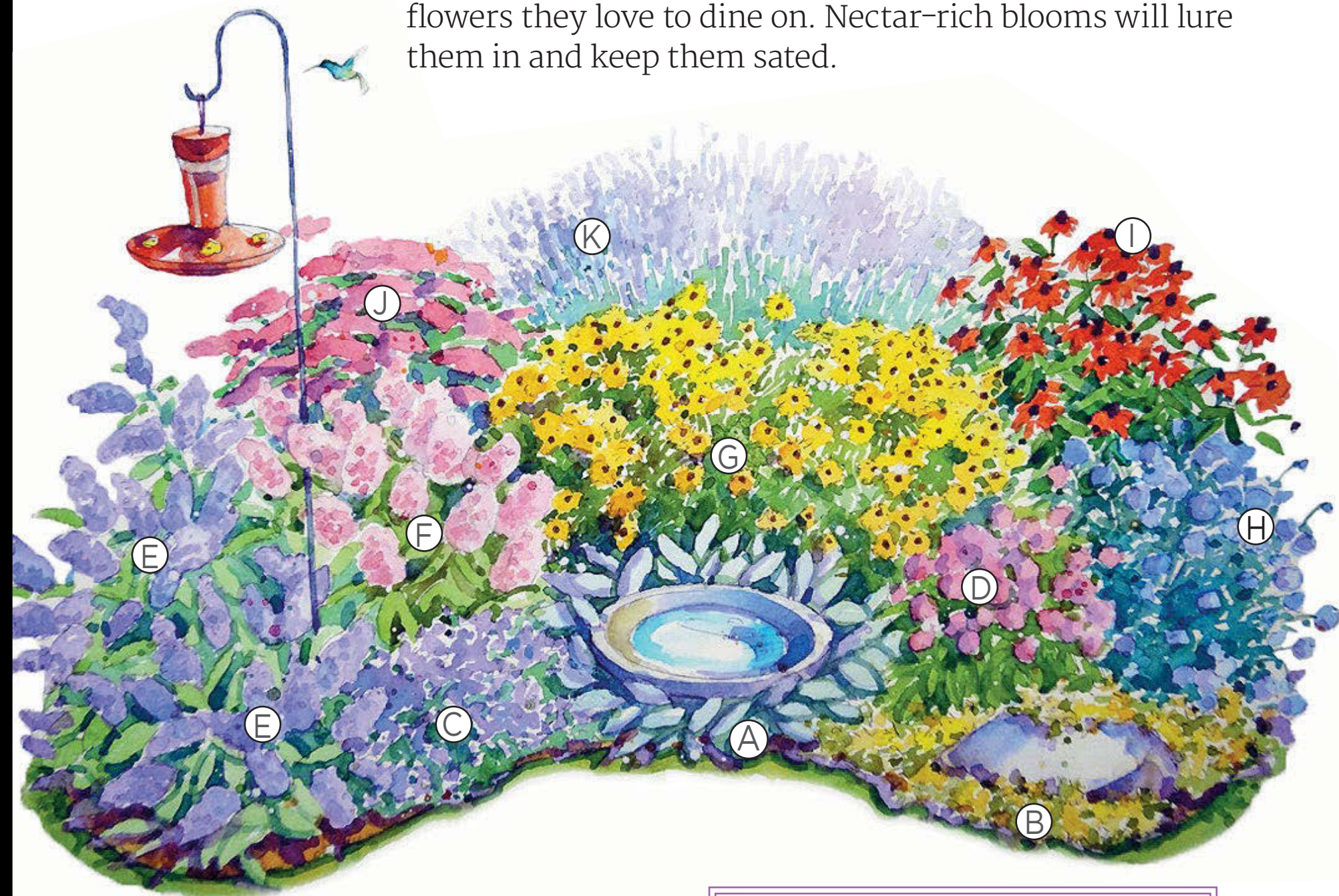
Cut tall perennials, such as Asiatic lilies, and create a living table runner.



SUN-
LOVING
WILDLIFE
GARDEN

Butterfly & Hummingbird Border

Attract winged wonders to your yard by planting the flowers they love to dine on. Nectar-rich blooms will lure them in and keep them sated.



Plant it and they will come!

If you build a beautiful perennial garden around all the favorites of birds and butterflies, you'll be able to enjoy the presence of these magical beings in your yard. This plan combines drifts of colorful blooms that will be as attractive to you as they are to your butterfly and bird friends. Add a small water feature (a simple bowl of fresh water), a hummingbird feeder (kept filled with sugary nectar), and a flat stone or two (so butterflies can sun themselves), and you'll enjoy a wildlife show all summer.

DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Nature lover's perennial border

PLANT LIST

- A. 'Silver Carpet' *Stachys*
- B. *Sedum Kamtschaticum variegatum*
- C. 'Christy' *Veronica*
- D. 'Grand Parade' *Monarda*
- E. 'Petite Flutterby Blue Heaven' *Buddleia*
- F. 'Light Pink Flame' *Phlox paniculata*
- G. 'Goldsturm' *Rudbeckia*
- H. 'Butterfly Blue' *Scabiosa*
- I. 'Sombrero Salsa Red' *Echinacea*
- J. 'Autumn Joy' *Sedum*
- K. *Perovskia* Russian Sage

Hummingbirds love red flowers, especially those with tubular blooms such as pineapple sage.



A. 'SILVER CARPET' STACHYS
Soft silvery leaves are also called lamb's ears
Zones 4-8



B. SEDUM (KAMTSCHATICUM VARIEGATUM)
Variegated leaves
Zones 3-8



C. 'CHRISTY' VERONICA
Low mounds of beautiful blue blooms
Zones 5-9



D. 'GRAND PARADE' MONARDA
Compact, upright plants covered in lavender-purple flowers
Zones 3-8



E. 'FLUTTERBY PETITE BLUE HEAVEN' BUDDLEIA
Long-blooming vibrant blue flowers
Zones 5-9



F. 'LIGHT PINK FLAME' PHLOX A dwarf phlox with fragrant soft pink flowers
Zones 3-9



G. 'GOLDSTURM' RUDBECKIA
A beautiful black-eyed Susan
Zones 3-9



H. 'BUTTERFLY BLUE' SCABIOSA
Also called pincushion flower
Zones 3-8



I. 'SOMBRERO SALSA RED' ECHINACEA
Bright blooms add saucy color all summer
Zones 4-9



J. 'AUTUMN JOY' SEDUM
Blooms from August into November
Zones 3-11



K. PEROVSKIA RUSSIAN SAGE
A cloud of purple blooms
Zones 4-9

To attract the most species of butterflies and birds, it's important to plant a variety of perennials. The old saying "Variety is the spice of life" is also true for wildlife.

Drought-Tolerant Border

Hot, dry conditions are no match for this collection of colorful perennials. If rain is scarce, they'll keep their cool, and will look good all season long.

COLORFUL
AND EASY
CARE!



Shrug off hot, dry days.

If you live in a region where summer dry spells are the rule rather than the exception, this plan is for you. It contains a mix of drought-resistant perennial plants that look terrific even when rainfall is scarce. Plus, it provides all-season interest, with early bloomers such as 'Rozanne' geranium and 'May Night' salvia, summer stars like 'Happy Returns' daylily and 'Moonbeam' coreopsis, and fall favorites such as sedum 'Voodoo' and 'Karl Foerster' ornamental grass.

DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Drought-tolerant perennial border

PLANT LIST

- A. 'Silver Mound' Artemisia
- B. 'Rozanne' Geranium
- C. 'Voodoo' Sedum
- D. 'May Night' Salvia
- E. 'Happy Returns' Daylily
- F. 'Moonbeam' Coreopsis
- G. 'Little Spire' Russian Sage
- H. 'Karl Foerster' Ornamental Grass
- I. 'Double Pink Knock Out' Rose
- J. 'Jackmanii Superb' Clematis
- K. 'Sweet Autumn' Clematis



A. 'SILVER MOUND' ARTEMISIA
Silvery foliage with all season appeal
Zones 1-9



B. 'ROZANNE' GERANIUM
Blooms early summer; midsize mound
Zones 4-9



C. 'VOODOO' SEDUM
Low-growing with bronze foliage and rosy flowers
Zones 2-9



D. 'MAY NIGHT' SALVIA
Spiky stems covered with rich blue flowers
Zones 3-9



E. 'HAPPY RETURNS' DAYLILY
Blooms May to frost growing 18 to 24 inches tall
Zones 2-9



F. 'MOONBEAM' COREOPSIS
Delicate threadleaf foliage with creamy yellow flowers
Zones 4-9



G. 'LITTLE SPIRE' RUSSIAN SAGE
Bears spikes of lavender-blue flowers in midsummer
Zones 4-9

Most clematis like to have their feet in the shade and their head in the sun. Use garden twine to guide young vines up and over fences.



H. 'KARL FOERSTER' ORNAMENTAL GRASS
Feathery green plumes appear in summer and turn to wheat color
Zones 3-9



I. 'DOUBLE PINK KNOCK OUT' ROSE
Bright red double blooms on easy-care plants
Zones 5-9



J. 'JACKMANII SUPERBA' CLEMATIS
Climbing 8 to 10 feet, this vine has deep violet flowers
Zones 4-9



K. 'SWEET AUTUMN' CLEMATIS
Mounds of small white fragrant flowers cover this vine in fall
Zones 4-8

Sun-Loving & Easy-Care

Transform any open spot in your landscape into a flower festival by adding a gorgeous mix of sun-worshipping perennials.



Want lots of color with little care?

Then check out this amazing garden plan. It's packed with sun-loving flowers that thrive during the hottest months of summer. These tried-and-true varieties have also proven themselves to be top performers under a wide range of tough conditions. Once established, these rugged bloomers require only minimum attention from you to keep them looking good.

DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Easy-care sun border

PLANT LIST

- A. 'Stella De Oro' Hemerocallis
- B. 'Vera Jameson' Sedum
- C. 'Mesa Yellow' Gaillardia
- D. 'Goldsturm' Rudbeckia
- E. 'Moonshine' Achillea
- F. 'Autumn Joy' Sedum
- G. 'Sombrero Salsa Red' Echinacea
- H. Russian Sage
- I. 'Shenandoah' Panicum

PLANTS THAT
ALMOST TAKE
CARE OF
THEMSELVES



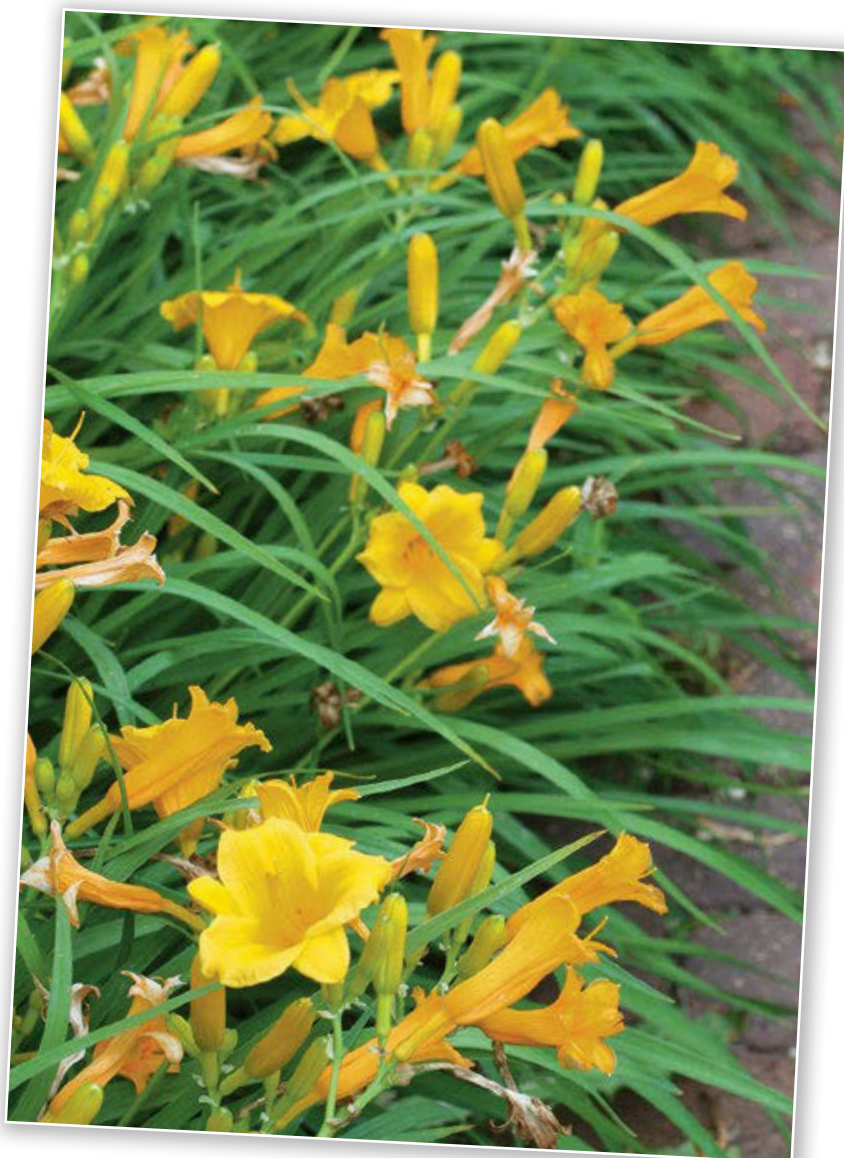
A. 'STELLA DE ORO' HEMEROCALLIS

In almost constant bloom from spring to fall
Zones 3-10



B. 'VERA JAMESON' SEDUM

Beautiful fleshy leaves; also makes a great groundcover
Zones 3-9



Daylilies are ideal edging plants. Their dense root systems choke out weeds, and handsome foliage softens path edges.



C. 'MESA YELLOW' GAILLARDIA

Blooms the first year from seed
Zones 5-10



D. 'GOLDSTURM' RUDBECKIA

Tolerates most soil conditions; grows 2 to 3 feet tall
Zones 3-9



E. 'MOONSHINE' ACHILLEA

Has pretty, fern-like foliage and flat yellow flowers
Zones 3-8



F. 'AUTUMN JOY' SEDUM

Flower heads attract butterflies and bees
Zones 3-9



G. 'SOMBRERO SALSA RED' ECHINACEA

Stocky plants produce bounties of bloom
Zones 3-8



H. RUSSIAN SAGE

Brilliant blue flowers appear in late summer
Zones 4-9



I. 'SHENANDOAH' PANICUM

Flower plumes add winter interest to the landscape
Zones 5-9

GIVES
VERTICAL
4-SEASON
INTEREST

Grass and Flower Border

Ornamental grasses mix well with flowering perennials and add drama to your winter garden.



DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Grass and flower border

PLANT LIST

- A. Golden Hakone grass
- B. 'Moonbeam' coreopsis
- C. Russian sage
- D. 'Hameln' *Pennisetum alopecuroides*
- E. *Echinacea purpurea*
- F. 'Karl Föerster' grass
- G. 'Little Zebra' *Miscanthus sinensis*

Get texture and color!

Show off perennial flowers with backdrops of luscious ornamental grasses. In this plan, popular perennials, such as coreopsis and Russian sage, rub shoulders with gorgeous grasses. Grasses provide vertical interest and texture. The grass varieties selected here will not spread and become invasive.



A. GOLDEN HAKONE GRASS

Variegated foliage, beautiful clumps
Zones 5-9



B. 'MOONBEAM' COREOPSIS'

Yellow flowers, lacy foliage; repeat bloomer
Zones 3-9



E. ECHINACEA PURPUREA

Reliable native, purple coneflower blooms from June to August
Zones 3-8



Purple coneflowers and Russian sage are winning companions; they bloom mid-summer through autumn and attract butterflies.



C. RUSSIAN SAGE

Gorgeous lavender-blue flowers, gray-green foliage
Zones 4-9



D. 'HA MELN' PENNISETUM ALOPECUROIDES

Also called dwarf fountain grass; feathery seed heads dance in the wind
Zones 5-9



F. 'KARL FÖRSTER' GRASS

Remains vertical in all weather; pretty flower heads in fall
Zones 5-9

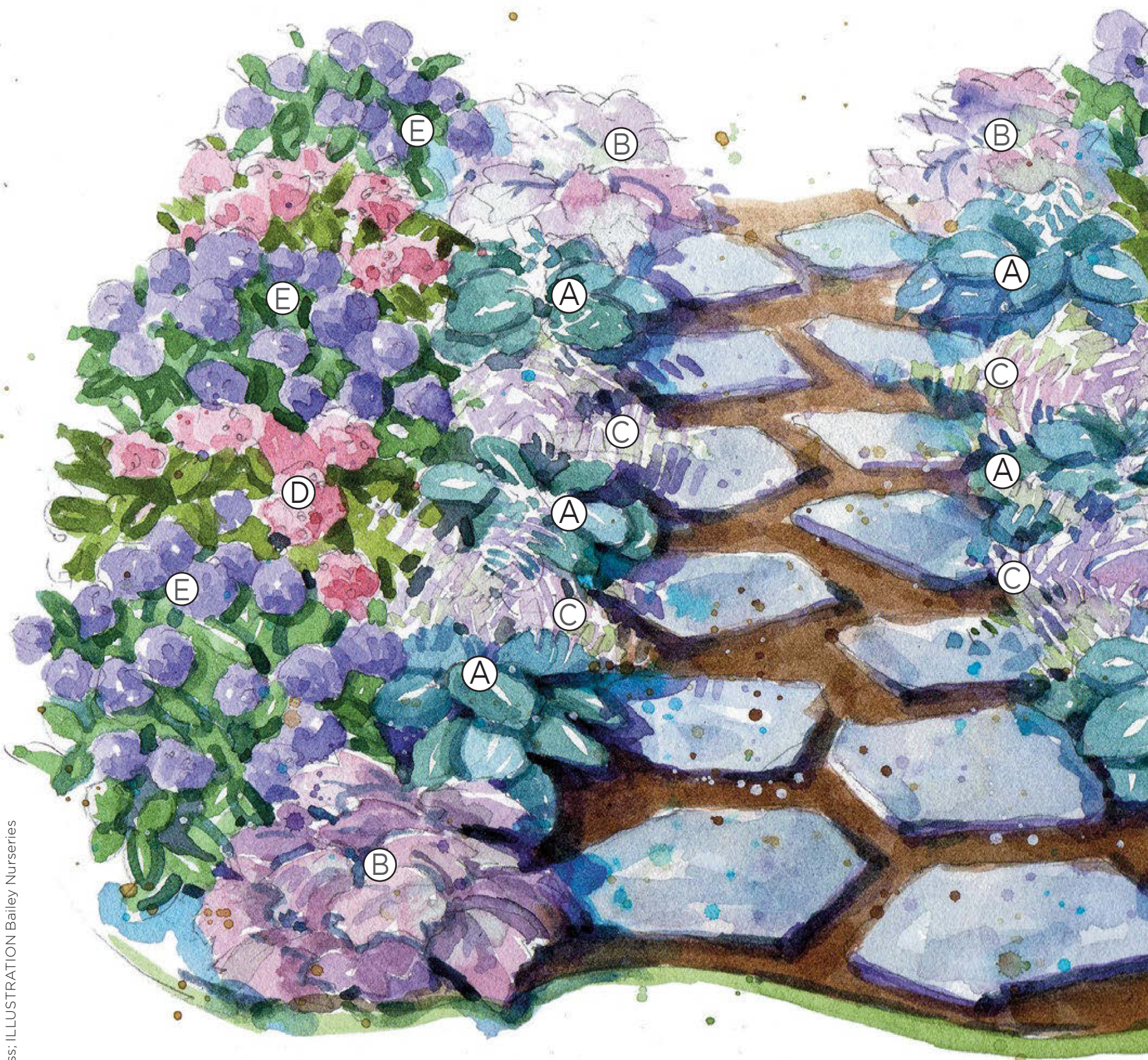


G. 'LITTLE ZEBRA' MISCANTHUS SINENSIS

Reddish-purple plumes top striped foliage
Zones 5-9

Shady Garden Path

Having a shady backyard shouldn't stop you from having a colorful garden. The key is using plants that prefer life out of the spotlight.



Turn on the lights!

Turning a barren, shady landscape into a welcome mat of color is easy. Start with a cobblestone or brick walkway and then flank it with matching beds brimming with shade-loving perennials and flowering shrubs. In this plan, each bed is about

4 feet deep to allow plenty of room for the plants to stretch out. Mulch spread between the pavers keeps weeds at bay and makes maintenance a snap. Hydrangeas and perennials are repeated through the border to create a gray, blue, and pink palette.



A. HOSTA 'WHIRLWIND'
Creamy swirls on dark green leaves
Zones 3-8



B. HEUCHERA 'GEORGIA PLUM'
Bright purple foliage with sprays of pink blooms
Zones 4-8



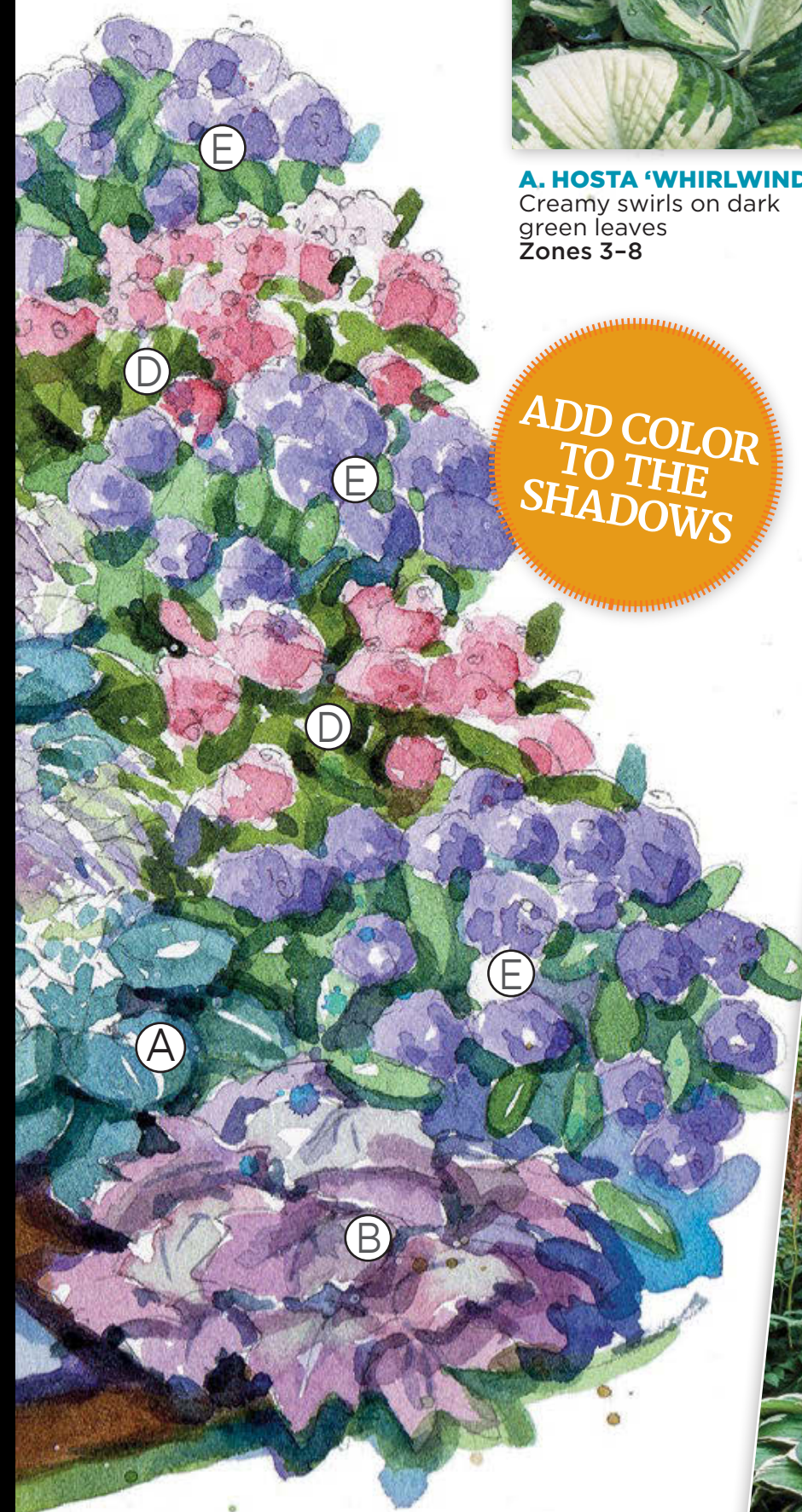
C. JAPANESE PAINTED FERN
Frilly, silver foliage with pale red highlight
Zones 4-7



D. HYDRANGEA BLOOMSTRUCK
Huge pink or blue flowers on red stems
Zones 4-9



E. HYDRANGEA TWIST-N-SHOUT
Lacecap flowers appear all summer long
Zones 4-9



DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

shady garden path

PLANT LIST

- A. Hosta 'Whirlwind'
- B. Heuchera 'Georgia Plum'
- C. Japanese Painted Fern
- D. Hydrangea BloomStruck™
- E. Hydrangea Twist-n-Shout®

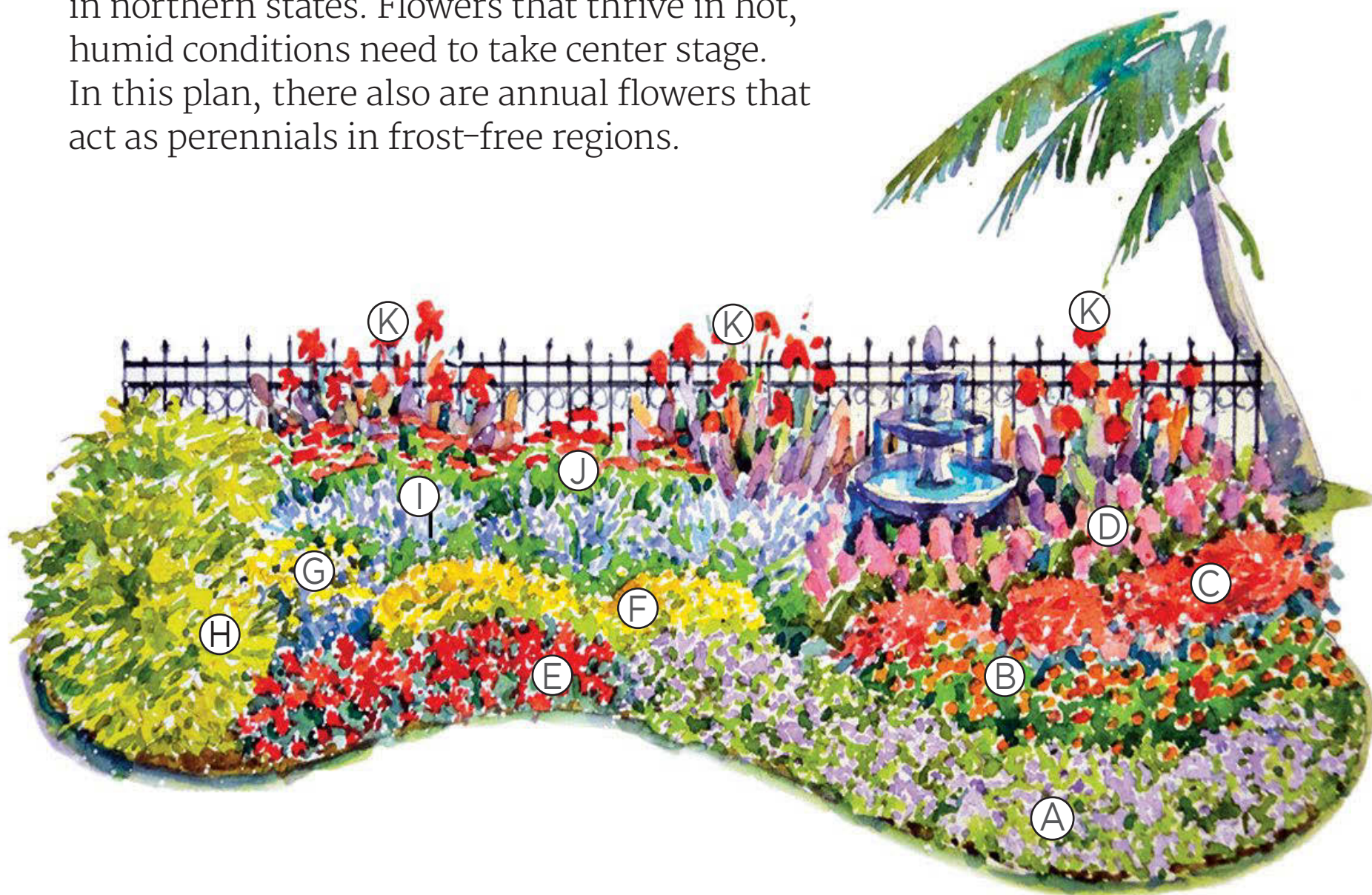


Hydrangeas and hostas are a dynamic duo for shady spots. Plant large, variegated hostas to disguise the base of hydrangea shrubs.

Southern Flower Border

Gardeners in the Deep South have different gardening challenges than their counterparts in northern states. Flowers that thrive in hot, humid conditions need to take center stage. In this plan, there also are annual flowers that act as perennials in frost-free regions.

PLANTS
THAT LOVE
THE HOT
SUN!



Flowers, Southern style!

Heat and humidity won't stop this garden from looking great even when the temperatures soar. That's because it's packed with tropical and semi-tropical bloomers that grow bigger and better every year. Northern gardeners will be surprised to discover that plants they grow as annuals are vigorous and hardy perennials in the Deep South. An added benefit to this garden plan is that some of the plants develop nectar-rich blooms that attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Many of the plants in this border are available in a wide range of colors, so select varieties that match your color scheme.

PLANT-BY-NUMBER GARDEN PLAN

Southern flower border

PLANT LIST

- A. Mexican heather
- B. Gaillardia
- C. Pentas
- D. Jacobinia
- E. *Lychnis hageana*
- F. Lantana
- G. Chrysocephalum
- H. Duranta
- I. Salvia
- J. Asclepias
- K. Canna

ILLUSTRATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS Costa Farms;
opposite bottom right: Shutterstock/Zerbor



A. MEXICAN HEATHER
Also called cuphea, it makes a great edging plant
Zones 9-11



B. GAILLARDIA
Available in many colors and bi-colors
Zones 5-10



C. PENTAS
A bee and butterfly favorite
Zones 8-11



D. JACOBINIA
Flowers all summer long
Zones 9-11



E. LYCHNIS HAGEANA
Prized for its pretty foliage and red blooms
Zones 5-8



F. LANTANA
Highly drought resistant and vigorous
Zones 10-11



G. CHRYSOCEPHALUM
Gray-green foliage and yellow blooms
Zones 7-10



H. DURANTA
Can become a large shrub in warm regions
Zones 10-11



I. SALVIA
Gorgeous flowers and it's deer resistant, too
Zones 4-9



J. ASCLEPIAS
A top pick of Monarch butterflies
Zones 3-9



K. CANNA
Tall and leafy with a topknot of color
Zones 9-11

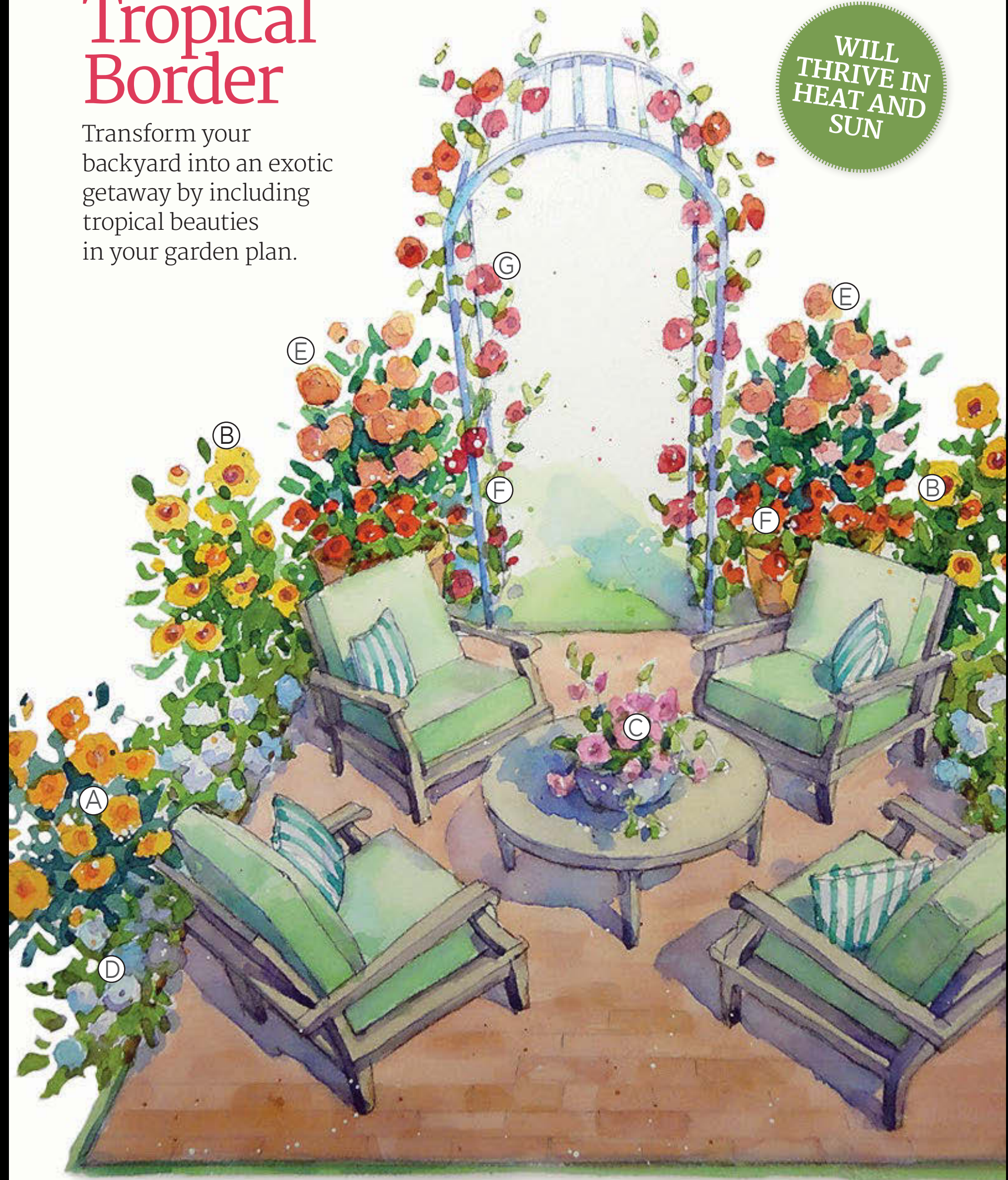
Use cannas in the back of the border to create a screen of tropical foliage and showy flowers.



Tropical Border

Transform your backyard into an exotic getaway by including tropical beauties in your garden plan.

WILL
THRIVE IN
HEAT AND
SUN





A. 'TIKI TEMPTATION' HIBISCUS
Extra large yellow flowers with pink centers
Zones 9-11



B. 'LEMON DROP' HIBISCUS
Vigorous double-flowering variety
Zones 9-11



C. 'PRETTY PINK' SUN PARASOL MANDEVILLA
Great choice for small containers
Zones 9-11



D. 'WHITE' SUN PARASOL MANDEVILLA
White blooms can be seen at night
Zones 9-11



Standard hibiscus underplanted with mandevilla and pothos provide tropical color all summer.



E. 'SUNRISE MIMOSA' HIBISCUS
Every flower has a different pattern
Zones 9-11



F. 'CRIMSON' SUN PARASOL MANDEVILLA
Makes a colorful ground cover
Zones 9-11



G. 'GIANT CRIMSON' SUN PARASOL MANDEVILLA
Fast growing climber, great on arbors
Zones 9-11

Flowers, flowers, flowers!

Tropical perennials such as hibiscus and mandevilla bloom like crazy when summer temperatures climb. With extra large flowers in an array of bright colors, tropical plants are a must-have addition to any backyard. In frost-free climates these eye-popping perennials stay in bloom for months. In the north, plant them in pots and move them indoors before frost. Place hibiscus and mandevilla near a sunny window and enjoy them as houseplants.

DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Tropical border

PLANT LIST

- A. 'Tiki Temptation' Hibiscus
- B. 'Lemon Drop' Hibiscus
- C. 'Pretty Pink' Sun Parasol Mandevilla
- D. 'White' Sun Parasol Mandevilla
- E. 'Sunrise Mimosa' Hibiscus
- F. 'Crimson' Sun Parasol Mandevilla
- G. 'Giant Crimson' Sun Parasol Mandevilla

Rain Garden Border

A rain border is a low-lying garden that soaks up water, preventing erosion. It helps filter and clean the water before it enters streams and rivers. It's also an ideal garden for wet or low-lying areas of your yard.

ECO-
FRIENDLY
WATER-
LOVING
GARDEN



Beautify a boggy spot!

A rain garden is a colorful solution for wet, boggy spots in your landscape. The rain garden is designed to soak up and cleanse runoff from your roof, driveway, paths, and lawn. Recent studies show that rain gardens can reduce runoff of chemicals

into streams and rivers by up to 30%. If you don't have a low area, you can create one by digging a shallow area and then adding rain garden plantings. Perennials that do well in wet soil are planted in the basin area; those that prefer drier digs are planted around the outside of the garden on higher ground.



A. LOBELIA CARDINALIS
Grows 2 to 4 feet tall;
blooms July to September
Zones 3-9



B. 'LITTLE JOE' JOE PYE WEED
Dwarf version of Joe Pye Weed; grows 3 to 4 feet tall.
Zones 3-9



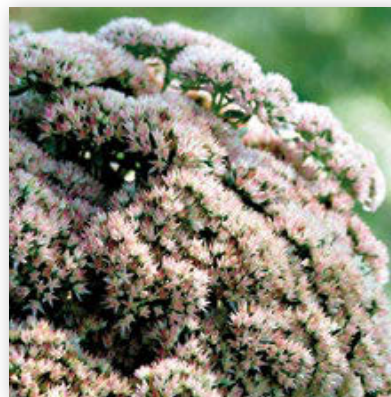
C. 'GOLDSTURM' RUDBECKIA
Upright plants produce gorgeous yellow flowers
Zones 3-9



D. RUSSIAN SAGE
Blooms July to October
Zones 5-9



E. 'STELLA DE ORO' DAYLILY
Blooms May to August; popular and hardy
Zones 3-10



F. 'AUTUMN JOY' SEDUM
Russet flowers in late summer
Zones 3-9



G. FEATHER REED GRASS
Stiff, upright growth habit with fuzzy seed heads
Zones 4-9

DO-IT-YOURSELF GARDEN PLAN

Rain garden border

PLANT LIST

- A. Lobelia cardinalis
- B. 'Little Joe' Joe pye weed
- C. 'Goldsturm' Rudbeckia
- D. Russian sage
- E. 'Stella de Oro' daylily
- F. 'Autumn Joy' sedum
- G. Feather reed grass



If you don't have room for an entire rain garden, pair rudbeckia and monarda together near a downspout or low area.



Build a beautiful container by combining colorful foliage perennials—such as gray leaf salvia, ornamental grass, and heuchera—with annuals such as calibrachoa.

perennials in containers

Enjoy flowers, foliage, texture, and color



Fall Finale, page 87



Terrific Texture, page 83



Made in the Shade, page 82

PAGE 76

GROWING PERENNIALS IN CONTAINERS

Plant colorful and leafy perennials in pots for instant gratification.

PAGE 78

THRILLER, FILLER, SPILLER

Looking for a focal point? Pot it up with just three types of plants.

PAGE 79

SUPER SUCCULENTS

Succulents are all the rage and so easy to grow in pots.

PAGE 80

SEEING RED

Add pops of color to your entryway with this sizzling red combo.

PAGE 81

NO-FUSS BEAUTY

Packed with low-water sedums, this pretty pot practically cares for itself.

PAGE 82

MADE IN THE SHADE

Brighten dark corners with a container brimming with shade lovers.

PAGE 83

TERRIFIC TEXTURE

Add a colorful mixture of flat, frilly, and fuzzy foliage.

PAGE 84

CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY

Purple salvia rubs shoulders with chocolate New Zealand flax.

PAGE 85

COTTAGE BLUES

Enjoy a mini cottage garden in a container in cool blue hues.

PAGE 86

FOUNTAINS OF FOLIAGE

Pack wavy wonders of grassy foliage into a pair of containers.

PAGE 87

FALL FINALE

Autumn delivers a flush of blooms perfect for pots.

Perennials in Containers



Growing perennials in containers—pots, window boxes, hanging baskets—is as easy as growing annual flowers. But unlike annuals, you can overwinter perennials and enjoy them the following year.

Perennials excel in containers just like their annual cousins, so you can enjoy them in solo groupings or mixed with other perennials and annuals to create gorgeous mixed containers. You can treat potted perennials like annuals (throw them away at the end of the season), or you can plant them in your garden in the autumn or store them in their containers over the winter. If you are looking for a way to save money on gardening, reusing the same perennials each year in your containers is a great way to do it.

PLAN FOR COLOR

Keep in mind that perennial flowers have a specific season of bloom, unlike annuals that bloom all summer long. For colorful containers, mix early-, mid-, and late-blooming perennials together. Or, team them with annuals. You can also mix in perennials with colorful foliage, such as artemisia, hosta, and heuchera, to add pops of long-lasting color.

OVERWINTERING YOUR POTTED PERENNIALS

Choose perennial varieties that are two zones hardier than your climate zone. For example, if you live in Zone 5, you can overwinter perennials that are hardy to Zone 3. The reason for this is that perennials in containers are more exposed to cold even when they are placed in a protected area such as a garage. The soil thaws out quicker in pots than in the ground. In late autumn, winter, and early spring, pots may thaw and then freeze again. This inconsistent soil temperature is hard on plants, but if you choose perennials that are used to colder climates, you have a better chance of keeping them alive in containers.



SEASONAL TIP

CONTAINER CAUTION

If you plan to leave your perennial container outdoors all winter, make sure to select a container that won't break. Clay and glazed pots can crack due to the freeze and thaw of soil throughout the cold season. Use plastic, metal, and wooden pots.

POTTED PERENNIALS: CARE TIPS

Here are guidelines for growing and overwintering perennials in containers:

- Hold back from feeding in fall and winter. Don't fertilize your perennials while they are dormant. Once the plants start growing again in the spring, begin fertilizing.
- Water containers until the soil freezes. But don't overwater. The soil should not be soggy going into winter.
- Make sure pots have adequate drainage. If pots come without drainage holes, use a drill to make them.
- Facilitate drainage by using pot feet or bricks to raise the pot off the ground.
- Overwinter perennials in containers in an unheated garage or protected spot.
- If you like, remove the plants from their pots and plant them in the fall. You can leave them in the ground permanently or dig them back up in the spring and repot them.



Mix perennials with annuals and shrubs. This container features *Crocsmia* 'Emily McKenzie', Orange Mexican Marigold, Creeping Jenny, *Campanula portenschlagiana*, *Coreopsis* 'Big Bang Mercury Rising', and *Hydrangea* 'Little Lime'.

Thriller, Filler, Spiller

Creating a gorgeous container is as simple as combining a tall focal point, a fill-in mid-size plant, and a trailing type.

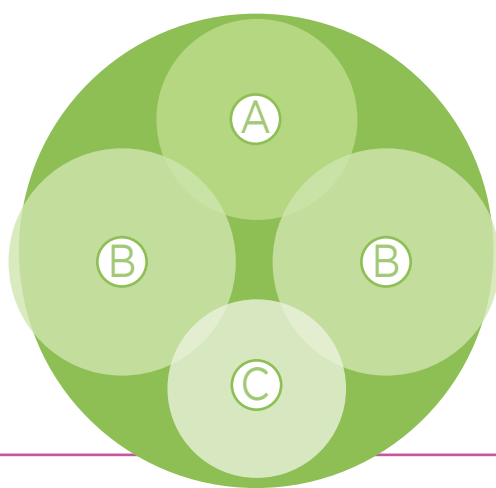


CARE TIP

START WITH GOOD SOIL

The key to a spectacular container starts with the soil. Always use a quality commercial potting mix to help retain moisture in between waterings. Choose mixes that are light, fluffy, and easy to plant in.

Beautiful containers don't have to be complicated. Case in point: This container features just three types of plants, each which plays a structural role. The tall juncus, a native rush, grows three feet tall and is an ideal "thriller" component. The "filler" is a big-flowering marigold. And the "spiller" is the long-trailing creeping Jenny. The trio looks great from spring until frost.



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Blue Arrows' juncus

Juncus inflexus

Zones 5-9

B. 'Durango Bee' marigold

Annual

C. 'Goldilocks' creeping Jenny

Lysimachia nummularia

Zones 3-10



PHOTOGRAPH Ball Horticultural Company

Super Succulents

Easy-care succulents team up to create a colorful, textural, and eye-catching centerpiece to any garden.

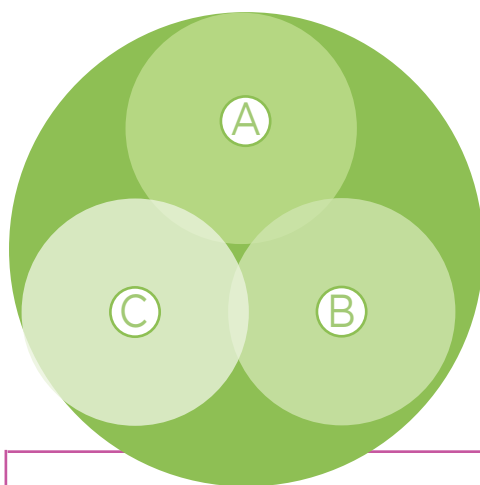
Succulents are all the rage—in the garden, in containers, overflowing from hanging baskets. It's not hard to see why succulents are so popular: They come in a wide range of shapes and colors and they mix and match so well together. These sun worshippers are also drought resistant so they are ideal for weekend gardeners. Succulents aren't too fussy about soil type, but they grow best in quick-draining potting mixes formulated for cacti and succulents. It's also important to make sure that the pot you use has drainage holes in the bottom because succulents sulk in wet soil.



**SEASONAL
TIP**

WINTER CARE

In cold climates, bring tender succulents indoors for the winter. Place them on a sunny window sill, then move them back outdoors in spring after the threat of frost has passed.



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Campfire' crassula

Crassula capitella

Zones 9-10

B. *Sedum caudicola*

Zones 3-9

C. *Kalanchoe longiflora*

Zones 10-11



Because succulents have shallow roots, they make ideal tabletop plants. You can jam two or three plants into a shallow bowl or urn.

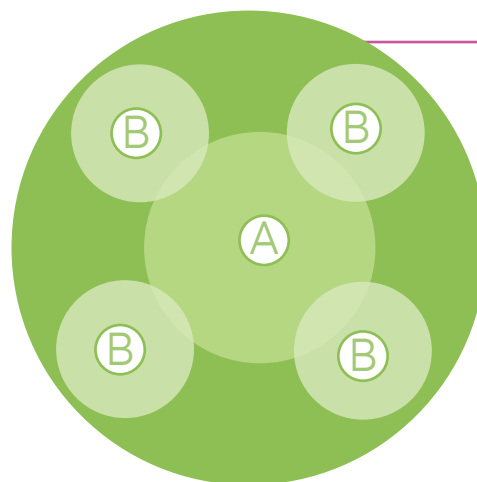
PHOTOGRAPH Costa Farms

Seeing Red

A pair of sizzling red perennials heats up a patio container all summer long.



Foliage plants such as heucherellas and heucheras offer amazing color for perennial containers. Heucherellas (a cross between heucheras and tiarellas) offer bright foliage in light green, dark burgundy, sunny yellow, and rich reds, as well as some showy bicolors. They send up pretty flower spires in summer, which adds an extra little twinkle. Choose trailing heucherella types, such as the Falls series, to add to containers; you'll love their drapery exuberance!



PLANTING RECIPE

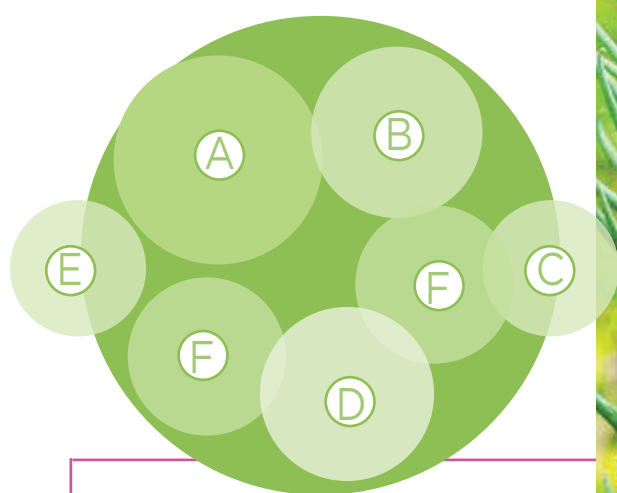
A. 'Redstone Falls'
heucherella
Zones 4-9

B. 'Red Sun' gaillardia
Zones 3-9

No-Fuss Beauty

If you travel a lot, are forgetful, or just want a container garden that doesn't need a lot of fuss, easy-care plants such as iceplant and sedum are ideal.

Plant up a low-care, low-water container with tough plants that can go without hydration for days at a time. For easy-care plantings, look no further than the fabulous sedum family. From tall growing 'Blue Spruce' to trailing 'Sea Urchin', sedums offer containers a wide range of colors, textures, and growth habits. Tuck in flowering ice plants to add pops of frilly fuchsia flowers.



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Blue Spruce' sedum

Sedum reflexum

Zones 3-11

B. 'Blue Chalksticks' senecio

Senecio serpens

Zones 9-10

C. 'Salsa Verde' sedum

Sedum makinoi

Zones 7-10

D. 'Sea Urchin' sedum

Sedum lineare

Zones 4-9

E. 'Angelina' sedum

Sedum rupestre

Zones 5-8

F. 'Sequins' iceplant

Delospermum floribundum

Zones 6-9



Choose a container with side pockets to accommodate smaller plants.

Made in the Shade

Brighten the dark corners of your landscape with a container brimming with shade-loving perennials paired with tropical beauties.

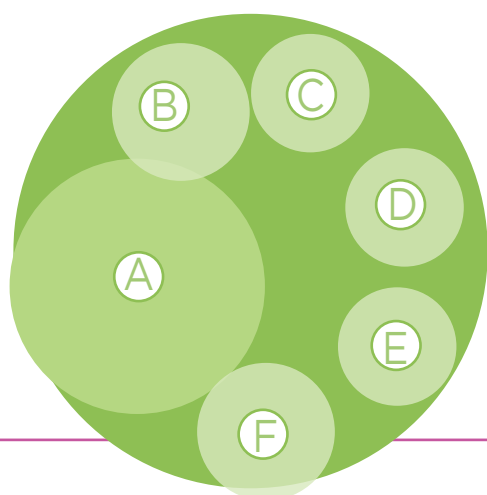


CARE TIP

TUCK IN HOUSEPLANTS

Don't overlook houseplants when designing your containers. These familiar interior plants will add a tropical touch to any perennial combination.

This gorgeous green ceramic pot hosts a colorful mix of perennials, annuals, and houseplants, including brunnera, angel wing begonia, asparagus fern, variegated rubber tree, and ornamental grass. In the fall, dig up the asparagus fern, rubber tree, and creeping wire vine and enjoy them indoors.



PLANTING RECIPE

- A.** 'Jack Frost' brunnera
Zones 3-8
- B.** Angel Wing begonia, Annual
- C.** 'Morning Light' maiden grass
Miscanthus sinensis, Zones 5-9
- D.** Variegated rubber tree
Ficus elastica
- E.** Asparagus fern
Asparagus sprengeri densiflorus
Zones 9-11
- F.** Creeping Wire Vine
Muehlenbeckia axillaris, Zones 8-10

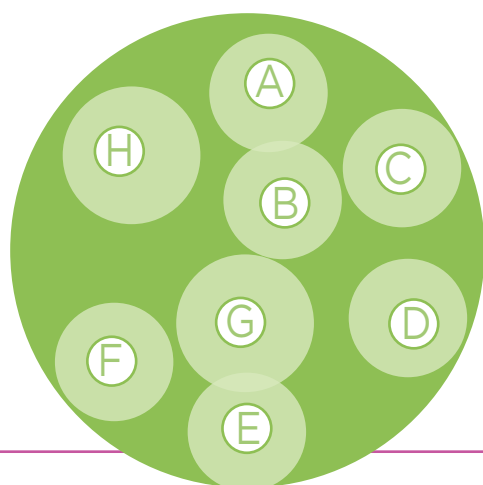


PHOTOGRAPH AND DESIGN Christina Salwitz

Terrific Texture

A colorful mixture of flat, frilly, and fuzzy foliage adds interest and texture to any container.

PHOTOGRAPH AND DESIGN Christina Salwitz



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Black Tropicana'

canna lily

Zones 7-11

B. 'Schwarzkopf'

Aeonium arboreum

Zones 9-11

C. 'Neon' sedum

Sedum spectabile

Zones 3-9

D. 'Toffee Twist' sedge

Carex flagellifera

Annual

E. 'Vera Jamison' sedum

Zones 4-9

F. Corokia

Zones 8-10

G. 'Lime Ricky' heuchera

Zones 4-9

H. Asparagus fern

Asparagus sprengeri

densiflorus

Zones 9-11



Who says you need flowers to have a colorful container? Foliage plants with a variety of leaf shapes and textures will add beauty and drama to any setting. This bright green pot contains a plush mix of bold annuals and perennials that almost beg to be touched every time you walk by. They are all drought resistant too, so there's no need to water this mix every day.

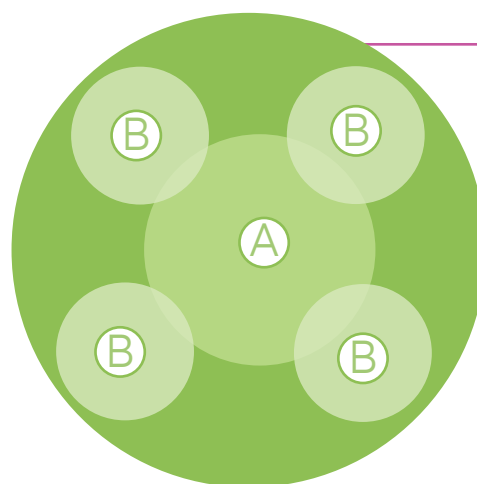
Chocolate and Raspberry

Create a gorgeous patio container using just two plants. Long-blooming salvia and New Zealand flax make for a pleasing pair.



Duos have always been in style: salt and pepper, peanut butter and jelly—and now: purple salvia and chocolate New Zealand flax (aka phormium). Long-leafed phormium makes a beautiful centerpiece. These strappy perennials feature wide flexible leaves that twist and turn. Surround this showy star with a chorus of salvia, which offers raspberry bloom spikes. Salvia's green leaf ruffle at the base adds additional lushness and texture.

PHOTOGRAPH Saxon Holt



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Chocolate' New Zealand flax
Phormium tenax
Zones 9-11

B. 'Purple Rain' salvia
Salvia verticillata
Zones 6-8

Cottage Blues

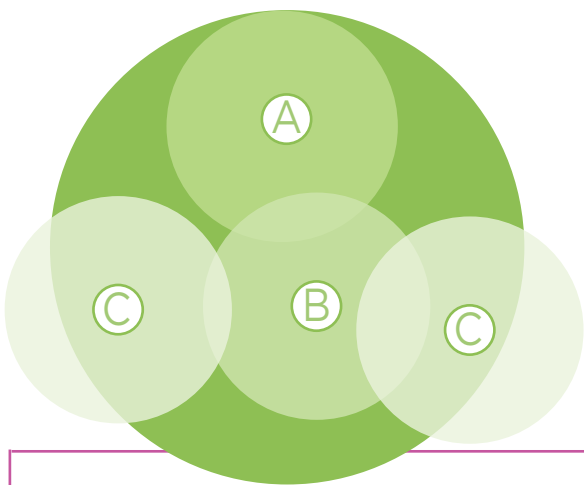
Enjoy a mini cottage garden in a container! Just pack it full of romantic standbys, such as salvia, pincushion flower, and baby's breath.



GET REPEAT BLOOM

CARE TIP When salvia or pincushion flower stop blooming, shear back plants and you may enjoy a second flush of flowers.

Add instant romance with a container that's as beautiful as a country bouquet. This large ceramic pot is packed with blue-hued cottage garden lovelies. Low-growing dwarf baby's breath makes an ideal pot edger; it bubbles over the side of the pot. Dwarf pincushion flower stays compact and mounded. And the spiky points of perennial salvia add height to this gorgeous trio.



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'New Dimension Blue' salvia, Zones 5-8

B. 'Blue Note' scabiosa
Scabiosa columbaria
Zones 4-8

C. 'Pixie Splash'
Gypsophila cerastioides
Zones 4-7



PHOTOGRAPH Ball Horticultural Company

Fountains of Foliage

Enjoy wavy wonders of grasslike foliage when you pack two containers (one small, one large) with colorful ornamental grasses and sedges.

Grasses and sedges are so easy to care for. Not only do they imbue a cool and casual look on your patio, they are also insect and disease resistant. These sedges like moist soil and look good from spring through fall. They fit any style of outdoor decor—from kicky contemporary to romantic cottage.

PLANTING RECIPES

Small Pot

A. ColorGrass 'Blue Arrows'

Juncus inflexus Zones 5-9

B. ColorGrass 'Coolio'

Koeleria glauca Zones 6-8

C. ColorGrass 'Live Wire'

Isolepis cernua Zones 8-10

Large Pot

A. ColorGrass 'Sirocco'

Anemanthele lessoniana, Annual

B. ColorGrass 'Red Rooster'

Carex buchananii Zones 7-9

C. ColorGrass 'Pony Tails'

Stipa tenuissima Zones 6-10

D. ColorGrass 'Bronco'

Carex comans Zones 7-9

E. ColorGrass 'Starmaker'

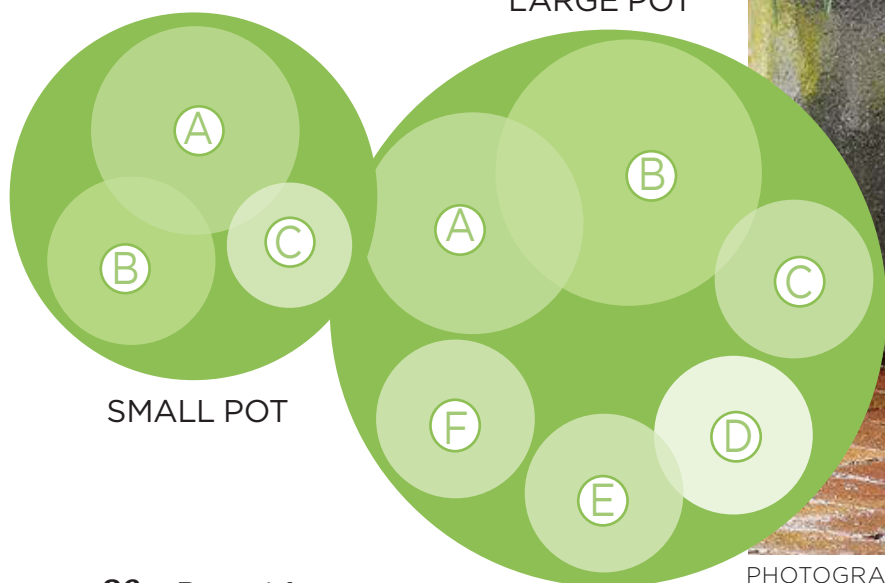
Luzula sylvatica Zones 4-6

F. ColorGrass 'Lucius'

Luzula nivea Zones 4-6



LARGE POT



SMALL POT

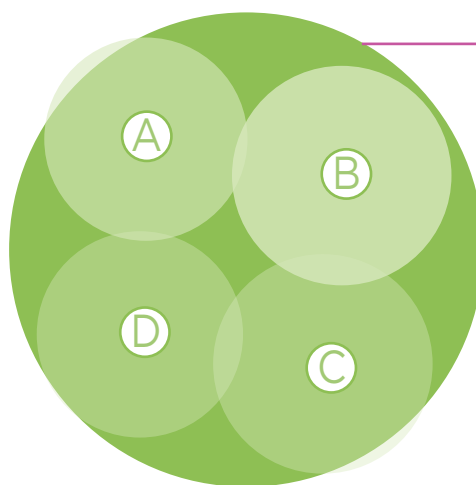
Fall Finale

Autumn brings a flush of beautiful bloomers that are ideal for containers. Plus you can add seasonal gourds and mini pumpkins!



PHOTOGRAPH Doug Jimerson

Summer's heat may take a toll on some container combos, but fall produces a number of showy perennials that mix well in containers. Mums and pansies are this season's main event. Both are available in full bloom and create instant impact in a container. Add a fall-blooming sedum such as 'Autumn Joy', 'Purple Emperor', or 'Autumn Charm', and tuck in an ornamental cabbage. Accent your container with fall's bounty, such as gourds, pinecones, mini pumpkins, or Indian corn.



PLANTING RECIPE

A. 'Autumn Joy' sedum
Zones 3-8

B. Chrysanthemum
Zones 5-9

C. Flowering Kale
Brassica oleracea
Annual

D. Pansy
Viola x wittrockiana
Zones 2-11



Some gardeners love perennials so much, they turn their passion into a home business. The owners of Stockholm Gardens sell a variety of unique perennials in their own backyard.

perennial lifestyles

Behind the scenes: seeds, plants, writing, travel



Miriam Goldberger,
wildflower expert, page 90



Tour a country garden, page 100



Add surprising color, page 106

PAGE 90

WILD AT HEART

Miriam Goldberger's passion for beauty and botany lead her to wildflowers.

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NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Cold-hardy perennials crowd the shelves of Stockholm Gardens in Stockholm, Wisconsin.

PAGE 100

FOCUS ON LOW MAINTENANCE

A country garden provides growing space and inspiration for garden writers Karen and Doug Jimerson.

PAGE 106

PERFECT COMBINATIONS

Seattle-area garden designer and coach Karen Chapman adds sweeps of easy-care color to her garden.



Wild at Heart



Miriam Goldberger's passion for beauty and botany led her to wildflowers.

From gardens to bouquets, let the wild blooms of nature color your world.

The fields that stretch around Wildflower Farm in southern Ontario may look like a happy accident of nature, but the perennial wildflower natives that create the colorful tapestry in bloom didn't sprout up on their own. They had a little help from Miriam Goldberger, the founder of one of Canada's oldest and largest wildflower seed companies.

WHAT IS A WILDFLOWER?

Some people may dismiss wildflowers as weeds. But these hardy and indigenous plants have played an important role in the landscape. Miriam defines wildflowers by those plants "that were here before European settlement." As it happens, these hardy native blooms were here before most of us were.

Purple wands of prairie blazing star, radiant yellow faces of sunflowers, and orange-and-purple coneflowers: These are the wild parents of the flowers that appear in beautiful gardens throughout North America. In fact, according to Miriam, the original wildflower versions of the perennials we know and love are some of the hardiest and most beautiful in the garden.

SUPER-EASY PERENNIALS

Wildflower Farm's first business was as a wholesale dried flower grower. "But I couldn't stop trying to grow things, so I decided to start Canada's first pick-your-own flower farm," she says. Miriam's cut flower business spawned requests for native plants and natural landscaping. "We kept telling people 'no, we don't do that,'" she says. But as she worked with these easy-care perennials, she saw beyond their beautiful blooms and discovered other, more tangible benefits. "Wildflowers are naturally low maintenance," says Miriam. They require no additional watering or fertilizing; these perennials are nearly self-sufficient. And that's exactly what time-challenged gardeners are looking for. So Wildflower Farm morphed again and blossomed into

LEFT The white spires of culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) make a lacy backdrop for yellow coneflowers.

OPPOSITE
A mid-summer harvest of wildflowers yields buckets of blooms for weddings and other summer events.





Purple prairie clover
(*Dalea purpurea*)
blooms from June
through August and
is extremely
drought tolerant.

a leading native seed grower that supplies hardy, native perennial seeds and seed mixes.

BUTTERFLY BUFFETS

Wildflowers are attractive to more than gardeners. “More and more people find their gateway into wildflowers through milkweed because of monarchs,” says Miriam. Monarch butterfly larvae consume plants in the milkweed family; it’s the only food they eat. Native perennials are an area’s first wild population smorgasbord. “These plants have coevolved with the creatures in the area,” says Miriam. The plants create nectar and seeds to support birds, bees, and butterflies. “These perennials had to make sure that they kept all the pollinators alive with the best nutrition,” she says. The relationship is reciprocal. “The plants depend on pollinators for their survival,” says Miriam.

WILDFLOWERS IN HOME GARDENS

You don’t have to have a meadow to enjoy native perennials. “There are easy ways to incorporate wildflowers into any garden,” says Miriam. “Growing wildflowers from seed is not hard to do,” she says. Some of these hardy perennials

RIGHT Create your own backyard prairie by planting a wildflower mix that includes coreopsis and gaillardia.

OPPOSITE Enjoy butterflies and bees in your garden when you plant a wildflower bed of pollinator-friendly flowers such as coneflowers, rudbeckia, and liatris.



can be sown in late fall (because they need the cold weather to germinate; this is called cold stratification). Others can be sown in spring. And like all perennial garden design, it’s important to plan for bloom times in every season. “Go with a few different species,” she says. “Choose one or two spring bloomers, a couple of early-summer flowers, and a couple late-summer and fall bloomers.” Mix wildflowers in with other perennials. “I’m not a purist,” says Miriam. “I don’t believe that everyone should only grow wildflowers.” But some of the easiest flowers may be the among the oldest.



GO WILD

Miriam Goldberger’s book, *Taming Wildflowers*, is a culmination of her 25 years in the field (literally). This book makes growing wildflowers accessible to everyone, even those who don’t know the difference between a wildflower and a weed. (St. Lynn’s Press, 2014) **\$18.95**

The book and wildflower seeds are available at www.wildflowerfarm.com.

Northern Exposure



Bring on the Polar Vortex! Discover perennials that can take the cold.

When the crowds sweep down from the Twin Cities on the Great River Road to visit the village of Stockholm, Wisconsin, they come for the arts scene, the views of the mighty Mississippi River, and (for the gardeners in the crowd), a stop at Stockholm Gardens.

HARDY AND HOMEGROWN

Stockholm Gardens, which specializes in hardy perennials that excel in the Midwest's cold winters and hot summers, opened its doors in spring 1987. "We had a small lean-to greenhouse on the side of the barn," says business owner and landscaper Harley Cochran. His wife, Beth Shide, who



Beth Shide and Harley Cochran share their knowledge about hardy perennials.

BELOW Once a barnyard, now a nursery, Stockholm Gardens sells a wide selection of ultra-hardy perennials.

OPPOSITE Seasonal perennials, such as mums and asters, take center stage at the nursery in summer and fall.



PHOTOGRAPHS Barbara O'Brien







LEFT Many of the perennials that Stockholm Gardens sells can be seen growing in display beds around the property.

BELOW Stockholm Gardens specializes in unique and common varieties of reliable plants such as hosta.



shares the business and runs the nursery's retail operation, began stocking plants that would prosper in their area.

"Starting a garden with hardy foundation plants, which are either native varieties or cultivars developed from natives, is a good strategy for creating strong 'bones' for a garden," says Harley. "Coneflowers and liatrus are native in origin," he says. Other hardy options include baptisia, gaillardia, geum, butterfly weed, rudbeckia, and Joe Pye weed.

WOODLAND WONDERS

Woodland perennials are also a big item at the nursery. "We have a lot of people locally with shade gardens," says Beth. "Shade gardeners are always looking for perennials with white flowers and gold leaves to brighten a shade garden," she adds. "For example, trillium is an early-blooming woodland wildflower that creates drifts of white flowers before many other perennials are blooming," she says. Beth suggests planting them *en masse* for the best effect.

LOYAL FRIENDS

"Our customers like perennials because the plants come back every spring," says Harley. "They emerge from the





ground—it gets your spring going,” says Beth. “There’s also a tradition and continuity with perennials,” says Harley. People recognize plants their grandparents or parents used to raise. Perennials, especially long-lived ones like peonies, last from generation to generation. “People have great reverence for their perennials,” says Harley. “We redid a landscape, and we had to work around the peonies in the yard that were from the client’s grandmother,” he says.

ORGANIC ALL THE WAY

“We raise and sell organic plants,” says Beth. Stockholm Gardens has been organic in their growing practices since day one of their business. In gardening, it’s the only way to go, according to Harley and Beth. “Organic soil creates better root systems,” says Harley. “The success of the plant growth is very good,” he says.

PLAN A VISIT

Stockholm Gardens is located on an old farmstead along Highway 35 about 60 miles south of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. Here, the Mississippi River widens out into Lake Pepin, a naturally occurring lake that borders Minnesota and Wisconsin.



OPPOSITE TOP Harley and Beth converted an old shed into a product-packed garden shop.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM In addition to shopping for plants, visitors also flock to Stockholm Gardens for the large selection of colorful ceramic pots and containers.

BELOW Inspiration abounds around every corner at the nursery with seasonal displays of perennial bloom.

BETH'S FAVORITE SHADE PERENNIALS

Try these easy perennials in shady spots:

● TRILLIUM

Elegant flowers with three petals; plants grow in clumps and bloom in spring in pink, white, and red; Zones 4-9

● TROUT LILY (aka dogtooth violet)

Sports yellow, bell-shaped flowers and spotted leaves in early spring; Zones 3-9

● VIRGINIA BLUEBELLS

Produces masses of nodding blue or lavender blossoms in early spring; Zones 3-9

● VARIEGATED SOLOMON'S SEAL

Tall green-and-white plants produce attractive dark blue berries in summer; Zones 4-8

● JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT

Unusual flowers (a hooded petal surrounds an upright flower spike) appear in spring; Zones 2-7

● SNAKEROOT

Produces white flower plumes covered in star-like flowers; plants grow 5-8 feet tall; Zones 3-8



CARE TIP

LET IT SNOW

As odd as it may seem, snow provides excellent insulation for plants. A perennial garden buried under several inches of snow is actually more protected from temperature variations than gardens that are not. So don't remove the snow from garden beds. It's like a blanket.



Focus On Low Maintenance



Every plant in this country garden is tested for its beauty, reliability, and ease of care.

Cat Crossing Farm is home and office for garden writers Karen Weir-Jimerson and Doug Jimerson. Doug Jimerson was the Garden Editor at *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine for 30 years. Karen has written numerous garden books and magazine articles. So it makes sense that their yard reflects their interests and their work. “We live on three acres, and about a half an acre of it is gardens,” says Karen. There’s a mix of prairie-style, old-fashioned perennials, such as rudbeckia, coneflower, and aster. But with so much land in gardens, the Jimerson are also interested in low-maintenance options. “We like carefree perennials such as daylilies, catmint, salvia,” says Doug. “Plus, these species offer consistent color from spring through fall.”

BOTANICAL MUSES

Karen and Doug use their gardens as test plots for everything they write about. “The gardens are like a laboratory for us,” says Doug. “We plant everything, then watch it grow through the seasons,” he says. “When you write about plants, you really need to know them, to see how they grow and perform,” says Karen. Cold winters, hot summers, drought—they all affect how perennials grow. “We get to see which ones are the toughest,” says Doug. “When perennials are in bloom, we can photograph them in their prime,” he says.

The 100 x 60-foot formal raised-bed garden features nine beds filled with perennials, roses, and herbs. “We plant a little bit of everything, so it’s always colorful,” says Karen. “We get to enjoy tall perennials such as Joe Pye weed and helianthus, which can grow more than 6 feet tall,” says Doug. “We plant them against the fence, which serves as support.” This garden also features old farm favorites (their house was built in 1903), such as peonies, hollyhocks, and phlox. “The peonies and phlox were original to the farm,” says Doug.



Karen and Doug Jimerson garden and write from their farm in Woodward, Iowa.



The formal garden is packed with perennials that grow in easy-care raised beds.





A pergola shades a sitting area at one end of the garden. An arborvitae hedge provides privacy and a screen from the wind.

WATER GARDEN WELCOME

In contrast to the formality and organization of the raised-bed garden is the more contemporary informal garden, which features a pergola on one end and a large water feature as the centerpiece. The seating area allows Doug and Karen to host small dinners or before-dinner drinks in the garden. “It’s a beautiful setting because it’s protected from the wind by an arborvitae hedge, and the waterfall creates movement, musical water sounds, and is home to about a dozen koi,” Karen says. “They are great entertainment,” says Doug. “They’re really friendly and roll over top of each other like puppies waiting to be fed.”

This garden is surrounded by vintage iron fencing that originally circled an old cemetery. “The fence divides the garden from the barnyard where our three horses hang out, and they often nibble the tops of the tallest blooms,” says Karen. The stone and gravel pathway is edged with catmint that blooms in early spring, continuing on through summer. “We shear back the catmint in midsummer to promote another flush of bloom,” says Doug. Several standard dwarf conifers offer structure in the summer and winter interest.



A 12x20-foot water garden, which features a waterfall at one end, is the centerpiece of the informal garden.





Late spring delivers a flush of peony and rose blooms. The center bed features a blue haze of nepeta and chive flowers.



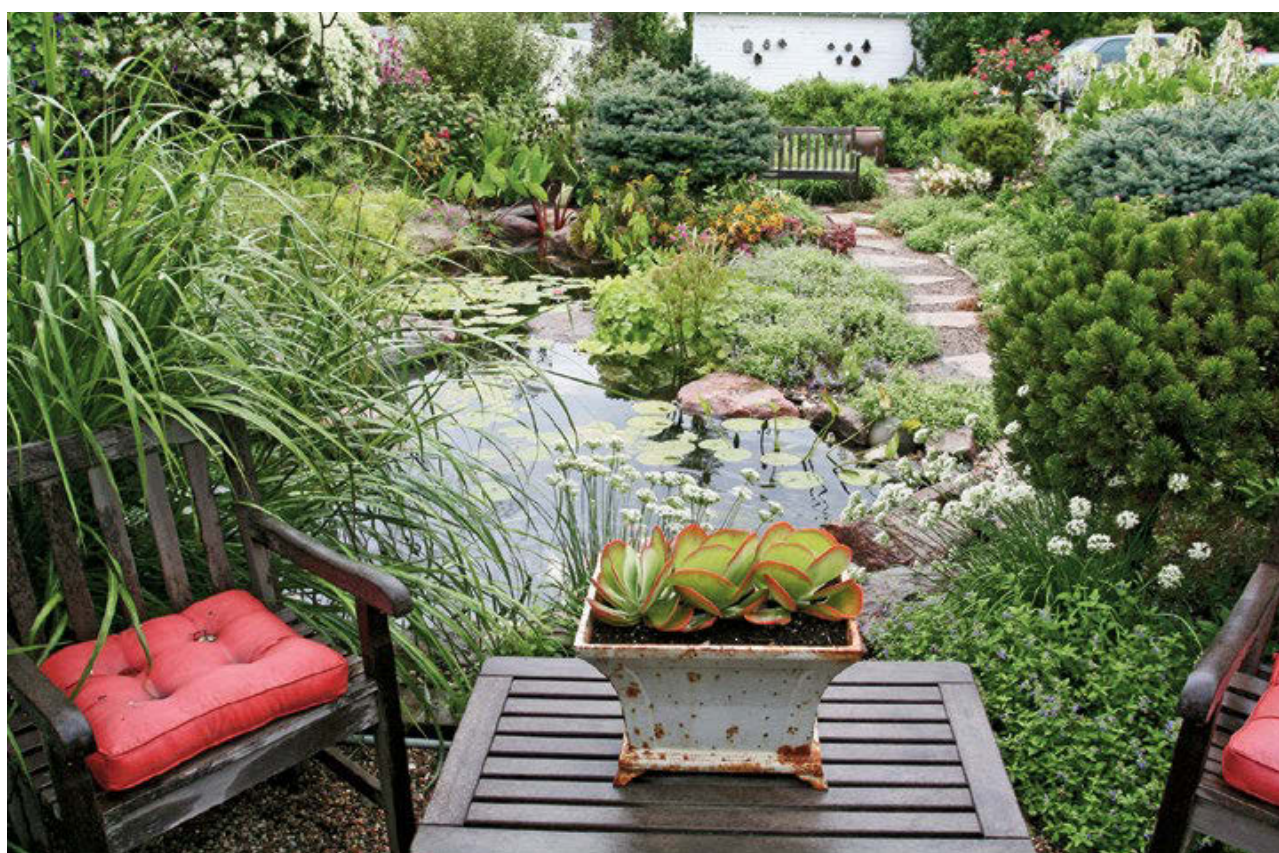
SPRING THROUGH FALL COLOR

“Thanks to super-hardy perennials, such as sedum, catmint, daylilies, and Asiatic lilies, there’s something in bloom in the garden continuously from early spring until after frost. Our earliest spring arrivals are hellebores, which bloom with the spring-flowering bulbs,” says Doug. “We’ve planted lilacs throughout the yard, as well as small flowering trees such as crabapples and serviceberry, so the spring garden really lights up after winter,” he says. “In spring, the gardens are filled with lots of blue-flowering perennials, such as Siberian iris, nepeta, baptisia, and chives,” says Karen. Then as the calendar rolls forward, the garden color shifts to pastels. “We have a lot of peonies,” says Karen. “You really can’t have too many peonies! They make the best cut flowers,” she says.

The summer garden sizzles with hot colors. Daylilies, Asiatic lilies, rudbeckia, coreopsis, and echinacea pepper the garden with yellow, red, and purple flowers. Old farm favorites such as hardy hibiscus, hollyhock, roses, and clematis scramble in unorganized splendor. As the temperatures cool down, the mums and asters begin to perk up. “We have masses of purple asters,” says Doug. “They’re butterfly magnets,” he says. “Having so many different types of perennials really attracts lots of butterflies and birds. We love nature, and nature loves our garden,” Doug says.

OPPOSITE Roses and clematis make beautiful partners.

RIGHT The water garden provides habitat for koi, toads, frogs, and the occasional heron.



PLANTS FOR PONDS

A water garden provides another option for perennial gardening. Here are six perennials that will grow in the water or at the water’s edge.

WATER LILIES

Hardy water lilies grow in pots of soil that are set into the water garden’s bottom. Zones 4-11

PICKEREL WEED

This aquatic plant grows 1 to 2 feet tall with heart-shaped leaves and spires of purple flowers. Zones 3-9

SEDGE

This plant grows in moist soil and resembles a grass; there are more than 100 different types of sedges. Zones 5-9

WATER FORGET-ME-NOT

This blue-flowering perennial needs moist soil; it grows at the edges of ponds and water gardens. Zones 3-8

DWARF CATTAIL

The smaller cousin of the large cattail, this bog plant produces strappy foliage and brown cattail seed heads. Zones 3-10



GARDEN DESIGNER
KAREN CHAPMAN



Perfect Combinations



Karen Chapman specializes in small garden design. She is co-author of the book *Fine Foliage*.

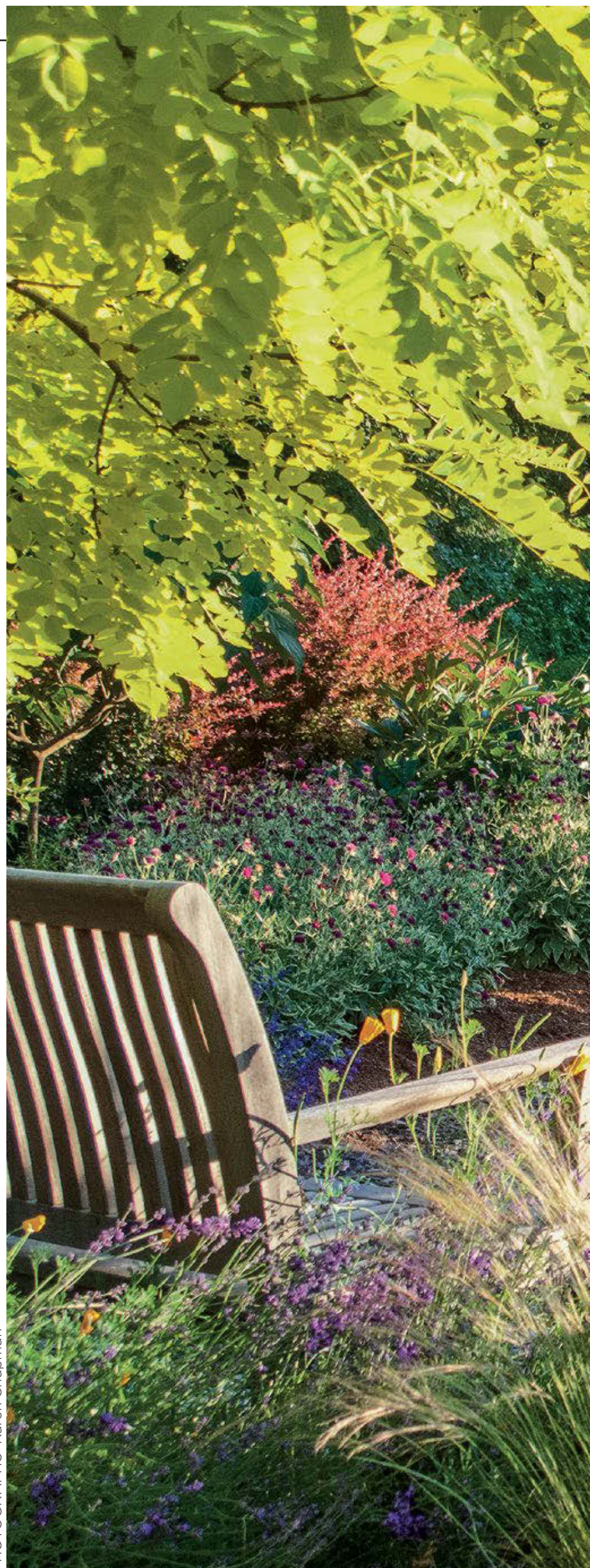
Garden designer and coach Karen Chapman uses her love of botanical beauty to inspire others.

Surrounding herself with beauty is the unofficial job description of Karen Chapman, owner of Le Jardinnet, a company that provides garden design, classes, and one-on-one garden coaching. “I get excited about finding the perfect combinations,” says Karen. Her garden in Duvall, Washington, is the ideal place to experiment with perfect plant pairings.

FROM MARSH TO MARVELOUS

Karen knows a little about transformation. “My garden was a mosquito-ridden marsh two and a half years ago,” she says. After installing a French drain to solve the water problem, she built a 150 x 50-foot perennial and shrub border. “A

A bench, a path, and bermed beds packed with colorful perennials and shrubs make this spot an ideal place to enjoy the end of the day. ‘Lucifer’ red crocosmia and showy ‘Red Carpet’ barberry are deer resistant and easy care.



PHOTOGRAPHS Karen Chapman





friend jokes that my garden is about the size of a New York apartment,” she laughs. But the large border allows Karen room to experiment with swaths of bold color, foliage combinations, and repetition of features.

SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY

When Karen teaches garden design, she starts with a “less is more” philosophy. “I teach my students to edit and simplify by adding focal points and surrounding them with gorgeous foliage,” she says. She does this in her own garden using large focal points, such as the cabin/studio on her property, as anchors for her borders. Her yucca-inspired glass sculpture is the centerpiece of her front yard; it’s a stunning sculpture that combines color, light, and form.

CREATE COLOR SWEEPS

“My border color scheme is sunset colors,” says Karen. A wide sweep of yellow-orange rudbeckia, frothy Mexican feather grass, and coppery ‘Double Play Gold’ spirea creates glowy banks of sunset hues. “I repeat colors to create continuity,” says Karen.

EASY IS IMPORTANT

An easy-care garden that can be enjoyed all year is what Karen strives to achieve in her designs and classes. “People want more than just a summer garden,” she says. To accomplish all-season color, she uses low-growing shrubs, such as ‘Red Carpet’ barberry, and ornamental grass, such as Mexican feather grass. She also chooses varieties that make gardening easier, such as drought-tolerant and deer-resistant plants that don’t need babying or replacing.

SEE, DO, LEARN

To learn more about garden design, take Karen’s class through Craftsby, an online education resource (craftsby.com). The course is filmed in her own garden, using her own garden techniques.

ABOVE A cabin anchors one end of the garden, serving as focal point and studio.

OPPOSITE A pair of chartreuse Adirondack chairs glow in front of a hedge of rhododendrons. Karen plants rhubarb at the base to add texture. “I love the big leaves,” she says.

ART MIMICS NATURE

Inspired by the foliage of a yucca plant, Karen worked with Seattle glass artist Jesse Kelly to create a distinctive garden focal point. “We used the container as the direction for the color scheme,” says Karen. “Jesse made each glass leaf individually.” The leaves are connected to rebar in the base of the container. The container stays outdoors all year. Blown glass is perhaps a surprising garden element, but many artists, including famous glass sculptor Dale Chihuly, feature outdoor blown-glass installations.



Perennials come in all shapes and sizes, from small to tall and vining. Here a Clematis 'Jackmanii' smothers an arbor in bloom.



must-have. perennials

Enjoy the easiest and most beautiful options



Easy-care daylilies, page 118



Fall's finale: chrysanthemums, page 116



Prairie native, purple coneflowers, page 120

PAGE 112

COREOPSIS, CLEMATIS & CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Sunny coreopsis, vining clematis, and versatile mums

PAGE 118

DAYLILY, ECHINACEA & GERANIUM

Dependable daylilies, prairie native echinacea, and hardy geranium

PAGE 124

NEPETA & ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

True-blue nepeta and grasses from small to tall

PAGE 128

HELLEBORE & HOSTA

Early-blooming hellebore and shade-loving hosta

PAGE 132

IRIS, LILY & PEONY

Sculptural iris, fragrant lily, and early-flowering peony

PAGE 138

RUDBECKIA, SALVIA & SEDUM

Sunny-faced rudbeckia, blue-hued salvia, and grow-anywhere sedum

PAGE 144

ZONE MAP AND RESOURCES

Resources for successful perennial gardening

PAGE 146

CARE CHECKLIST

Seasonal tips for gorgeous gardens



Coreopsis

Smothered in flowers and a snap to grow, coreopsis provides long-lasting color in your borders and containers.

For almost nonstop color, you can't beat coreopsis. This rugged native perennial produces wave after wave of pretty flowers from spring till fall. Each flower is held aloft on a wiry stem so the whole plant seems in motion whenever the wind blows. Also called tickseed, coreopsis generally falls into two types: threadleaf and broadleaf. Threadleaf varieties such as 'Moonbeam' have slender, lacy foliage with flowers appearing throughout the plant. Broadleaf types such as 'Early Sunrise' have wide leaves at the base with flowers appearing above the plant on thin stems. Growing 18 to 24 inches tall, coreopsis works well in the center of the flower border or in mixed containers. Divide the plants every few years to keep them in top form.

ALL ABOUT COREOPSIS

Botanical name: Coreopsis
Common name: Tickseed
Light requirements: Sun
Flower color: Yellow, orange, pink
Height: 1 to 3 feet
Width: 1 to 3 feet
Zones: 3-9



LEFT Mounds of yellow-flowering coreopsis add instant curb appeal. ABOVE The cheery, open-face flowers of coreopsis make long-lasting picks for bouquets. OPPOSITE A sunny stand of 'Zagreb' coreopsis lights up a shed garden.

VARIETIES



MOONBEAM
Flowers heavily from June to August



EARLY SUNRISE
Early bloomer with petal-packed flowers



NANA
Dwarf variety that grows 6 to 9 inches



SUNFIRE
Long blooming, deep burgundy center



FIREFLY
Bicolor blooms atop threadleaf foliage

DEER
AND
DROUGHT
RESISTANT

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Attracts birds
- Good for cut flowers
- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Deer resistant



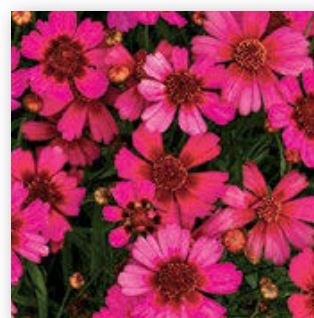
SUNSHINE PINK
Pastel option for
cottage gardens



SUNNY DAY
Remove spent flowers
to encourage rebloom



GOLDEN SHOWERS
Forms attractive,
flower-packed clumps



GARNET
Low-growing mound
of vibrant blooms



SNOWBERRY
Long blooming and
profuse; great color!

Clematis

A hardy, perennial vine, clematis will smother an arbor, fence, or wall in sumptuous bloom—and come back year after year.

Clematis vine is a perennial gardener's best friend. This vine flowers in many colors (white, red, blue, purple, pink, bicolors) and offers a wide range of bloom types (from singles to petal-packed doubles). Use clematis in the landscape where you want a splash of vertical color or to camouflage the side of a building or fence. Clematis grows best in full sun where its roots are shaded by other plants. There's an old adage that clematis likes her head in the sun and her feet in the shade.

ALL ABOUT CLEMATIS

Botanical name: Clematis

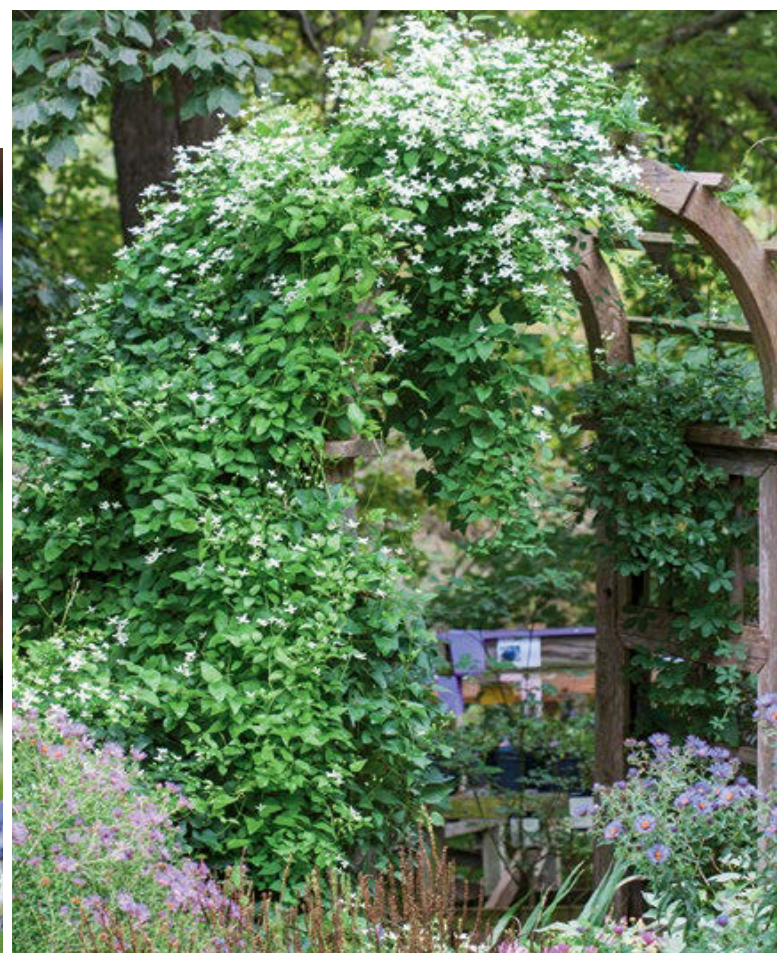
Common name: Clematis

Light requirements: Sun

Flower color: Purple, red, white, blue, pink, bicolors

Height: 8 to 10 feet

Zones: 3-9



LEFT 'Arabella' is a non-vining clematis that will scramble over a low fence. ABOVE Sweet Autumn clematis produces masses of small, white, fragrant blossoms. OPPOSITE 'Jackmanii' is a classic clematis that grows 7 to 10 feet tall.

VARIETIES



NIOBE

Four-inch red flowers; grows 8 to 10 feet tall



HENRYI

Six-inch white blooms; new foliage is bronze



NELLY MOSER

Blooms early summer, then in fall again



RAMONA

Big blooms; flowers from spring to fall



BETTY CORNING

Bell-shaped flowers; has a light fragrance

**GROW
TOWERS
OF
FLOWERS!**

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Good for cut flowers
- Small varieties grow well in containers
- Easy care



JACKMANII

Big blooms offer lavish summer display



SWEET AUTUMN

Late summer bloomer; small fragrant flowers



BELLE OF WOKING

Stunning multi-petal, 4-inch flowers



ASAO

Large, fragrant single flowers



BEES JUBILEE

Best in partial shade; repeat bloomer

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

LATE
SUMMER
BLOOMS

FALL
BLOOMS

Chrysanthemum

Stage a colorful fall finale in your landscape with a generous helping of chrysanthemums. These exuberant bloomers add instant impact.

Chrysanthemums are your fall garden's greatest asset. These beauties come in a wide array of colors and sport several different flower shapes, including decorative petal-packed blooms, roundish pompon types, single or daisy-like flowers, fringy blooms, and those with quilled- and spoon-shaped flower petals. To encourage additional flowers and compact growth, pinch the plants back in the spring when they are a few inches tall. Stop pinching in early July, and the plant will reward you with a tight dome of flowers. Mums are perennials, but can be short-lived in the garden. They may need to be replaced every few years. For quick color, buy ready-to-bloom plants in fall and pop them into the ground. Plant mums in containers to add instant curb appeal to porches and entryways.

ALL ABOUT CHRYSANTHEMUM

Botanical name: Chrysanthemum

Common name: Mums

Light requirements: Sun

Flower color: White, yellow, orange, purple, bronze, red, pink

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 3 feet

Zones: 5-9



LEFT Mounding 'Mammoth Coral Daisy' grows 2 to 3 feet tall. ABOVE Create a colorful corner with red mums and a blue birdbath. OPPOSITE 'Adonis Purple' adds instant impact to a fall bed.

VARIETIES



**MAMMOTH YELLOW
QUILL**
Tubular petals have a spoon-shaped end



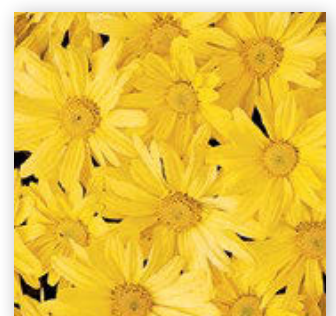
**ROADRUNNER
BRONZE**
Mounded growth habit; great fall color



SPARKLE WHITE
Daisy-like flowers attract butterflies



STARSTRUCK PINK
Ideal for borders and containers



XANTHUS YELLOW
Super cheery blooms in daisy form



Pair mums with
asters or sedums that
bloom at the same
time. They mingle
well with ornamental
grasses, too.

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Great for containers
- Easy care
- Fall color



FAME RED

Mounded; grows 14 to 24 inches tall



AMATA PINK

Petal-packed flowers with yellow eye



GRANDEUR YELLOW

Sunny flowers are hardy to 20 degrees



DELPHI PURPLE

Just drop it in a basket for an instant gift!

**BLOOMS
IN COLD
WEATHER!**

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

LATE
SPRING
BLOOMS

SUMMER
BLOOMS

FALL
BLOOMS

Daylily

Enjoy daily flushes of new blooms!
Daylilies are a landscaper's dream plant.

Daylilies get their name because their blooms last just one day; they open in the early morning and are spent by the next day. For this reason, daylilies don't make good cut flowers. But they do make gorgeous garden and landscape plantings because they bloom prolifically. Plants produce attractive clumps of spearlike leaves, and flowers are borne on long, leafless stems. Daylilies come in four bloom seasons: spring, summer, late summer, and reblooming. Varieties include a wide range of colors, making them adaptable in garden beds, borders, and mixed with shrubs in the landscape. They are also available in many flower forms, from traditional trumpet shape to flat, open flowers, and frilly doubles. Daylilies are so hardy that you can find them in the wild, growing happily in ditches and fields. They stand up to tough weather conditions, are drought tolerant, and can grow in full shade to partial shade. If you are looking for the easiest of perennials, daylilies are your plant.

ALL ABOUT DAYLILIES

Botanical name: Hemerocallis

Common name: Daylily

Light requirements: Sun, part sun

Flower color: Yellow, orange, white, pink, white, orange, red, burgundy, cream, bicolors

Height: 6 inches to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 3

Zones: 3-10



LEFT 'Black Eyed Stella' is a reliable bicolored rebloomer. ABOVE Daylilies make ideal companions with Asiatic lilies. OPPOSITE Spider daylilies, such as 'Ruby Spider', sport narrow, reflexed petals.



VARIETIES



BLACKBERRIES AND CREAM
Blooms early and midseason



BOWL OF CREAM
Stunning 5-inch blooms; ruffled petals



CANDLELIGHT DINNER
Gorgeous double blooms; frilled edges



CAPE BRETON
Fragrant 6.5-inch blooms



EARLY EARLY TRUFFLE
Pastel apricot flowers etched with purple

RELIABLE
COLOR
YEAR
AFTER
YEAR



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Easy care
- Grows in containers
- Drought tolerant
- Great groundcover



ENCHANTED FOREST
Lemon melon hue;
early bloomer



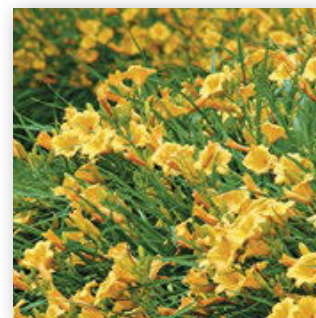
**LEDGEWOOD'S
BORN FREE**
Cream gold with
burgundy eye



ROSEANNE
Warm pink flowers
with rose eye



VENETIAN FRINGE
A fringy, swirly
beauty



STELLA DE ORO
Classic, long-lasting,
dependable



Echinacea

Commonly called purple coneflower, this hardy prairie perennial offers great looks and easy care.

If you love attracting birds and butterflies to your garden, purple coneflower is a must-have perennial. Nectar-sipping butterflies, such as monarchs, and seed-eating birds, such as finches, flock to the open flowers of this plant. It's one of the easiest perennials to grow too, because it excels in a range of zones (from 3 to 9) and can grow in a variety of soil types. Purple coneflower is a prairie native, which means it can stand up to all sorts of tough conditions. The native variety of this perennial features large daisylike flowers with pink-purple petals and orange centers. Hybrid coneflowers offer more colors and flower shapes. If you love cut flowers, plant ample coneflowers and enjoy bouquets all summer. This hardy perennial is nearly disease resistant and pest free. Grow it in the garden, landscape, and containers.

ALL ABOUT ECHINACEA

Botanical name: Echinacea

Common name: Purple coneflower, coneflower

Light requirements: Sun

Flower color: Yellow, pink, white, orange, red, cream

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 2 feet

Zones: 3-9



LEFT Coneflowers are long-blooming, colorful mixers in perennial borders. ABOVE 'Hot Lava' coneflower has strong stems, making it ideal for cut flowers. OPPOSITE Coneflowers, such as PowWow Wild Berry, make excellent container plants.

VARIETIES



CHEYENNE SPIRIT
Offers range of color; first-year flowering



DOUBLE SCOOP CRANBERRY
Frilly flower in deep cranberry hues



MAGNUS
Large, 7-inch flowers; butterfly magnet



PIXIE MEADOWBRITE
Dwarf coneflower grows 18 inches tall



POWOW WHITE
Pure white petals; golden yellow center



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Attracts butterflies and birds
- Good for cut flowers
- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant
- Deer resistant

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Ball Horticultural Company, Terra Nova Nurseries; Opposite left: Donna Lloyd; Opposite right: Terra Nova Nurseries; Left: Ball Horticultural Company



POWWOW WILD BERRY

Large raspberry single-petal blooms



DOUBLE SCOOP MANDARIN

Flowers the first year; non-fade color



SOMBRERO FLAMENCO ORANGE

Sturdy, compact, flower-filled plants



SOMBRERO SANDY YELLOW

Bright yellow petals with orange center

**CUT
FOR
BOUQUETS!**

SHORT
HEIGHT

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

SUMMER
BLOOMS

FALL
BLOOMS

Geranium

Long-flowering perennial geranium offers beautiful flowers and gorgeous foliage, and is one of the most easy-care flowers in the garden.

Perennial geraniums grow in beautiful mounds featuring attractive, finely cut foliage topped with flowers in lovely hues, mostly in the blue, rose, and pink range. Most flowers are single petaled, but there are a few double-blooming varieties. Perennial geraniums are commonly called cranesbill geranium because the stamens of some of the species are pointed, resembling the beak of a crane. This no-fuss perennial prefers full sun, but will bloom happily in partially shaded locations. Because of their compact stature, they are ideal for border edges and along pathways. Geranium blooms in summer and continues to frost, when the foliage turns orange-red. Perennial geraniums are not to be mixed up with the common annuals we all call geraniums, which are actually Pelargoniums.

ALL ABOUT GERANIUM

Botanical name: Geranium

Common name: Cranesbill, hardy geranium

Light requirements: Sun, part sun

Flower color: Blue, pink, fuchsia, white, lavender

Foliage color: Green; changes to russet in autumn

Height: 6 inches to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 4 feet

Zones: 3-9



LEFT Bees and other pollinators are attracted to geranium blooms. ABOVE 'Bevans' produces mounds of blooms on 1-foot-tall plants. OPPOSITE Hardy geranium pairs well with other mounding perennials, such as dianthus.

VARIETIES



ANN FOLKARD
Purple blooms with golden foliage



ROZANNE
Gorgeous! A popular geranium that shines



RED ADMIRAL
Deep purple blooms; flowers all summer



SUMMER SKIES
Double blooms; ideal for cottage gardens



AZURE RUSH
A sort of 'Rozanne' but more compact



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Attracts pollinators
- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant
- Deer resistant
- Fall color

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Blooms of Bressingham, Studio G; Opposite left: Graham Jimerson; Opposite right: Blooms of Bressingham; Left: Jerry Pavia



ALAN BLOOM

Forms gorgeous, spreading mounds



APPLE BLOSSOM

Soft pink; finely cut foliage



BALLERINA

Lilac-pink flowers top mounded plants



BLUE SUNRISE

Clear-blue blooms; chartreuse foliage

OFFERS
COLORFUL
FALL
FOLIAGE



Nepeta

Commonly called catmint, this reliable perennial blooms in a cloud of small flowers from spring through fall.

One of the easiest perennials around, nepeta offers gardeners waves of bloom nearly all season. Small, intricate flowers come in many colors depending on the variety, including blue, purple, pink, and white. The loose, mounding growth habit of nepeta is especially pretty when plants are smothered in graceful bloom stalks. The foliage is equally pretty—a soft gray-green, blue-green, or lime green, depending on the variety. After the first bloom in spring, you may want to shear back plants so that they can rebloom. This versatile perennial comes in several heights: ‘Six Hills Giant’ stands 3 to 4 feet tall, while dwarf types, such as ‘Little Trudy’, grow just 10 to 12 inches tall. Some forms reseed freely. If you don’t want catmint to spread, choose nonseeding forms. This plant is also very drought tolerant, so it’s a great choice for low-maintenance beds.

ALL ABOUT NEPETA

Botanical name: Nepeta

Common name: Catmint

Light requirements: Sun, part sun

Flower color: Blue, pink, white

Foliage color: Gray-blue, gray-green, light green

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 2 feet

Zones: 3-10



LEFT Nepeta looks best when planted in mass. ABOVE Big-flowering ‘Blue Dragon’ pairs well with other drought-tolerant perennials such as red-hot poker. OPPOSITE Nepeta makes an ideal edger along walkways.

VARIETIES



PURPLE HAZE

Buddleja-like purple-blue flowers



LIMELIGHT

Dwarf type with green-yellow leaves



BLUE DRAGON

Blue flowers look like tiny dragon heads



PINK DREAMS

Brilliant soft pink flowers



WALKERS LOW

Grows 30 inches tall; long bloom season



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Attracts butterflies
- Long blooming
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant
- Deer and rabbit resistant

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Ball Horticultural Company, Terra Nova Nurseries, Pat Hayward for Plant Select®, Studio G; Opposite left: GAP Photos/Elke Borkowski; Opposite right: Terra Nova Nurseries; Left: GAP Photos/Carole Drake



PINK CAT

Compact growth; butterfly magnet



BLUE LAGOON

Low growing; good in containers



LITTLE TRUDY

Compact, low-spreading growth



BLUE WONDER

Great groundcover or edging option

BLOOMS
FROM
SPRING TO
FALL!

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

TALL
HEIGHT

Ornamental Grass

SPRING
COLOR

SUMMER
BLOOMS

FALL
BLOOMS

WINTER
COLOR

Wild and wavy, grasses offer structure, beauty, and winter interest to borders and gardens.

Perennial ornamental grasses offer an amazing four-season asset to gardens. In spring, they rise from the ground in a mound of foliage. In summer, they grow large, mixing well with blooming perennials. In autumn, some grasses take on tawny or russet hues, adding rich color at the end of the gardening season. And in winter, their feathery flowerheads looks beautiful etched with ice or topped with frost. There are lots of different types of grasses—and they come in all sizes, from small edging varieties to 6 feet (and taller) fountains of foliage. There are annual grasses too, so if you want perennial types, check the plant tag. Some grasses can become invasive and travel around your yard and garden. If you want to plant those types, do so in an area where they are contained, such as in a raised bed or container.

ALL ABOUT ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Botanical names: Carex, Miscanthus, Calamagrotis, Isolepis, Stipa, Fescue, Pennisetum, Panicum

Common names: Feather reedgrass, Hakone grass, Fountaingrass, Oatgrass

Light requirements: Sun

Height: 1 to 6 feet

Width: 1 to 2 feet

Zones: 3–9



LEFT Grasses mix well with evergreen shrubs and trees for easy-care landscapes. ABOVE Tall, narrow metal containers give grass a contemporary vibe. OPPOSITE Mix ornamental grasses with perennials to add texture to beds.

VARIETIES



AMAZON MIST CAREX

Swirls of minty green with white accents



RED ROOSTER CAREX

Great color; four-season interest



JAVELIN JUNCUS

Tall, upright bright green foliage



KARL FOERSTER CALAMAGROSTIS

Upright growth; great fall color



LIVE WIRE ISOLEPIS

Textural option for containers



GRASSES
ARE
KINETIC AND
DANCE IN
THE WIND

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Great four-season appeal
- Good for cut flowers
- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Ball Horticultural Company, Terra Nova Nurseries, Studio G;
Opposite left: Holly Lepere; Opposite right: Ball Horticultural Company, Left: Allan Mandel



**PRAIRIE DROPSEED
SPOROBOLUS**
A great border; fine
texture; blooms in fall



**SIROCCO
STIPA**
Turns from green to
copper to pink in fall



**DWARF FOUNTAIN
GRASS**
Produces fluffy beige
plumes; 2-3 feet tall



**MISCANTHUS
SINENSIS**
Feathery flower
spikes; mounded habit



**ALBO STRIATA
HAKONECHLOA**
White stripes,
mounded form

SHORT
HEIGHT

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

WINTER
BLOOMS

SPRING
BLOOMS

Hellebore

One of the first perennials to bloom, hellebores announce the start of the gardening season.

The nodding blooms of hellebores are an enchanting vision in the late-winter and early-spring garden. Often called Christmas Rose and Lenten Rose, hellebores come in a wide variety of colors. They are also available in single- and double-flowering forms. Hellebores like moist soil and do well in shady to partially shaded locations. They are lovely planted in woodland borders, mixed perennial gardens, and mingled with spring-flowering bulbs such as crocus and narcissus. Good companion plantings include hosta and astilbe, which also prefer moist, shaded locations. Hellebore leaves stay green all year, so they offer winter interest.

ALL ABOUT HELLEBORE

Botanical name: Helleborus

Common name: Lenten Rose, Christmas Rose

Light requirements: Partial sun, shade

Foliage color: Green

Flower color: Red, burgundy, pink, rose, yellow, white

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 3 feet

Zones: 4-9



LEFT Petal-packed 'Golden Lotus' also features leathery evergreen foliage. ABOVE Spring-flowering hellebores bloom at the same time that crocus appear in the garden. OPPOSITE Corsican hellebore pairs well with wood spurge Euphorbia.

VARIETIES



COTTON CANDY
Heavy bloomer; soft pink double flowers



DARK SHADOWS
Dusky pink with dark slate shadows



SPARKLING DIAMOND
Brilliant creamy blooms



HONEYHILL JOY
Fresh green nodding blooms



JADE TIGER
Apple green with burgundy edge



**EARLY-BIRD
BLOOMER!**

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Early-season bloomer
- Deer resistant
- Great cut flower
- Excels in a variety of light conditions: shade to partial shade

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties and left page: Terra Nova Nurseries; Left: Saxon Holt



ONYX ODYSSEY
Burgundy, almost black flowers



PAINTED DOUBLES
The belle of the winter garden



PEPPERMINT ICE
Lotus-like 3-inch blooms; red edge



RED SAPPHIRE
Double rose-red flowers



GOLDEN LOTUS
Double yellow flower with 15-20 petals

SHORT
HEIGHTMEDIUM
HEIGHTTALL
HEIGHT

Hosta

SUMMER
BLOOMS

These lush and leafy shade dwellers add color and texture to dark spots in your yard.

Growing a garden under trees in deep shade may seem like an impossibility. But thanks to the leafy charms of this versatile perennial, anyone can grow a beautiful garden in even the shadiest spots. Hostas come in a wide range of sizes, from miniature 8-inch 'Blue Mouse Ears' to 5-foot-tall 'Empress Wu'. Although hostas are revered for their heart-shape or spear-shape leaves, they also bear showy summer flowers on slender stems. They make pretty cut flowers—some are even fragrant. Hosta flowers attract hummingbirds and pollinating insects, too. Hosta varieties offer a range of variegated forms with splashes and splotches of gold, yellow, and white. Leaf colors vary from chartreuse to dark green to hues of blue. Plus, leaves can be smooth and flat to ridged and puckered.

ALL ABOUT HOSTA

Botanical name: Hosta

Common name: Plantain Lily

Flower color: White, lavender

Light requirements: Shade, partial shade

Height: 6 inches to 4 feet

Zones: 3–9



LEFT A hosta growing in tall planter makes a beautiful focal point. ABOVE Hostas produce spikes of lavender or white blooms. OPPOSITE A myriad of colors and leaf shapes make hostas easy garden mixers.

VARIETIES



FIRE AND ICE

Small hosta; twisted, variegated leaves



FRANCES WILLIAMS

Blue-green variegated leaves



WHIRLWIND

Upright growth; leaves form a wavy mound



AUTUMN FROST

Small; 10 to 12 inches tall; great for pots



PATRIOT

Heat resistant; lovely white edges

HOSTAS EXCEL IN POTS



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Add leaves to bouquets
- Offers texture and color
- Easy care



KROSSA REGAL

Big! Grows to 3 feet tall in a vase shape



AUGUST MOON

Medium-large hosta with seersucker leaves



ELEGANS

Grows up to 3 feet tall and 6 feet wide



GOLDEN TIARA

Small hosta; ideal for containers or edging



Iris

Iris are prized for their lavish and unique flowers, which come in a wide range of shapes and colors.

Iris is a big family of flowers with more than 250 species. The most popular is bearded iris, so-called because of the way the outer petals, called “falls”, droop with fuzzy hairs at the base. Bearded iris plants come in tall and dwarf types, some of which bloom both in spring and summer. Siberian, Japanese, and Louisiana iris also are treasured and flourish in slightly moist soil. All iris produce spear-like foliage that looks terrific in the garden even when the plants aren’t in bloom.

ALL ABOUT IRIS

Botanical name: Iris

Common name: Iris

Light requirements: Sun

Foliage color: Green, variegated

Flower color: Blue, purple, burgundy, pink, rose, yellow, white, bicolors

Height: 6 inches to 3 feet

Width: 6 inches to 2 feet

Zones: 3-9



LEFT Dwarf iris bloom in early spring and grow 6 to 10 inches tall. ABOVE *Iris pallida* features bold variegated leaves that look great even when the plant is not in bloom. OPPOSITE Siberian iris thrive in moist soil. Plant them in low spots in your landscape.

VARIETIES



ABSOLUTE JOY

Bicolor dwarf bearded type



AFTERNOON IN RIO

Gorgeous, tall bearded iris



ALL NIGHT LONG

Unusually dark, tall bearded type



BLUEBERRY TART

An adorable reblooming iris



CACHE OF GOLD

Cheery yellow blooms; reblooming



SOME
VARIETIES
ARE
FRAGRANT!

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Great cut flower
- Easy care
- Deer resistant
- Drought tolerant

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Schreiner's Iris Gardens; Opposite: Studio G; Left: Adam Gibbs/KAC Productions



CORONATION ANTHEM
Bicolor Siberian iris



EASTER TIDE
Showy Louisiana iris



THIS I LOVE
Beautiful Louisiana iris



SILVERBAND
Elegant Japanese iris



Lily

Lilies have it all: big showy flowers, intoxicating fragrance, and a long bloom period.

Lilies are perennial bulbs that last for years—with little care. Plant bulbs in full sun or partial shade, and enjoy gorgeous flowers from late spring through fall. There are several types of lilies, including Asiatics, Orientals, Orienpet, trumpet, and martagon hybrids. Each group offers a wide range of colors, heights, flower types, and garden uses. Asiatic lilies bloom earlier in the season, spread well, and have no fragrance. Oriental lilies have larger flowers and exude lovely perfume. Orienpets are crosses between Oriental and trumpet lilies. Trumpet hybrids offer long trumpet-shape flowers. And martagon lilies, also called Turk's cap-types, have flowers with petals that curl backward. Lilies are great naturalizers and will spread freely. They prefer fertile soils and need good drainage.

ALL ABOUT LILY

Botanical name: *Lilium*

Common name: Lilies, Tiger lilies, Turk's cap

Light Requirements: Sun, partial shade

Foliage color: Green

Flower color: White, pink, orange, red, yellow, bicolors

Height: 1 to 8 feet

Width: 1 to 2 feet

Zones: 4–8



LEFT Lilies look best when planted in a mass. ABOVE Trumpet-shape flowers and long, colorful buds make for beautiful bouquets. OPPOSITE Plant tall varieties at the back of the border or against a fence; they may require staking.

VARIETIES



**STAR GAZER/
ORIENTAL**

Grows 3 to 4 feet tall



**PURPLE RAIN/
ASIATIC**

Grows 2 feet tall; a great cut flower



VIVALDI/ASIATIC

Blooms in June and July



LONGWOOD/ASIATIC

June-flowering with a light scent



EYELINER/ASIATIC

White with striking purple-black edge

PLANT
LILIES IN
CONTAINERS!

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Fragrant
- Great cut flower
- Easy care
- Deer resistant
- Drought tolerant

PHOTOGRAPHS Studio G



LILIUM MARTAGON
Species lily; does best in light shade



**MUSCADETTE/
ORIENTAL**
Petals feature attractive spots



ZAMBESI/ORIENPET
Features pink buds before opening to white



**BELONICA DOUBLE/
ORIENTAL**
Gorgeous double blooms; fragrant



Peony

One of spring's most beloved blooms, peonies are hardy and long-lasting—and perfume your yard with amazing fragrance.

Peonies are one of the easiest—and most satisfying—perennials to grow. They need little care and will bloom for decades. One of spring's best bloomers, peonies feature lavish flowers in a wide range of types: singles, semidoubles, doubles, and anemone centered (also called Japanese). They flower in pastels (white, pink, yellow, cream, and coral) and deeper colors (rose, red, and burgundy). Peonies are loved for their beauty as well as their sweet perfume; they are one of the most fragrant flowers. When you cut them for a bouquet, make sure to shake off any ants that love the buds of these flowers (it's a myth that the ants actually open the buds). After the flowers fade, the plant remains an attractive shrub. Peonies die back to the ground in the fall but rise again in spring. They may need staking; use a peony ring to keep shrubs erect.

ALL ABOUT PEONY

Botanical name: Paeonia

Common name: Peony

Light requirements: Sun

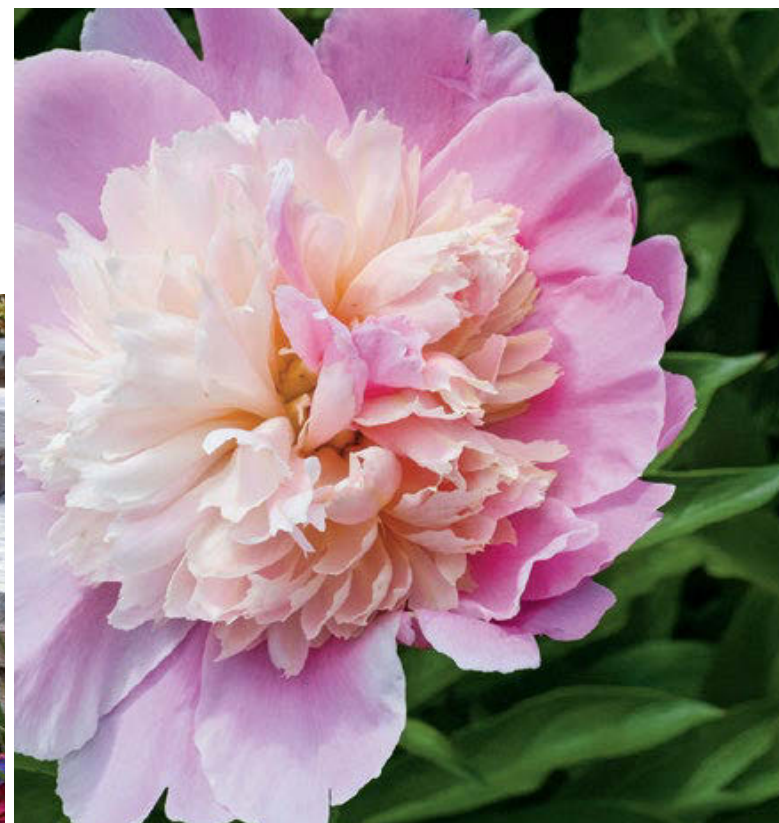
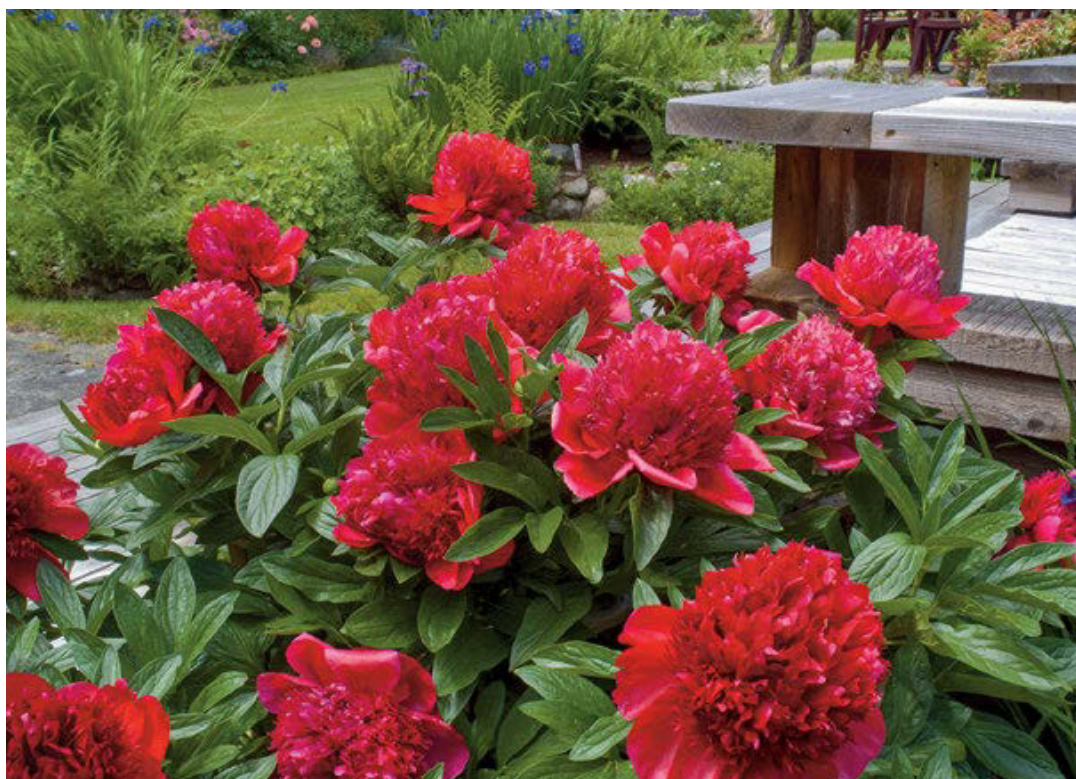
Foliage color: Green

Flower color: White, pink, rose, red, yellow, coral, bicolors

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 2 to 3 feet

Zones: 2-8



LEFT Peonies offer a wide variety of flower forms; this one is a bomb-type double. ABOVE Many peony flowers change color as they mature. OPPOSITE Peonies fit into any landscaping plan and offer beautiful early-, mid-, and late-spring color.

VARIETIES



'AMERICA'

Early season bloomer with mild fragrance



'ANGEL CHEEKS'

Petal-packed flowers top dark green leaves



'CHEDDAR GOLD'

Gorgeous golden center; very fragrant



'CORAL CHARM'

Semi-double deep coral flowers



'EMBRACEABLE PINK'

Raspberry petals with a creamy center



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Fragrant
- Great cut flower
- Easy care
- Deer resistant
- Drought tolerant

IDEAL FOR
COTTAGE-
STYLE
BORDERS

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm and Nursery, Peonyshop.com;
Opposite left: Adam Gibbs/KAC Productions; Opposite right: Studio G; Left: Saxon Holt



'FAIRVIEW'

Classic white double;
the perfect cut flower



'HAPPY'

Grows just 15 inches
tall; very early blooms



'LEMON CHIFFON'

Unique! Lemony hue is
unusual for peonies



'URSA MINOR'

Fragrant small blooms
are tightly packed



Rudbeckia

The cheerful summer blooms of rudbeckia are a delightful addition to any garden. Grow them in drifts or clumps for the biggest color blast.

Commonly called black-eyed Susans, these hardy prairie natives bloom their hearts out starting in midsummer and continuing until frost. These perennials will grow in full sun as well as light shade, so you can enjoy them nearly anywhere in your yard and garden. A great mixer in the landscape, plants form upright mounds and mix well with ornamental grasses, coneflowers, and other prairie companions—as well as leafy and evergreen shrubs. Ideal for cottage or country gardens, these easy perennials make long-lasting bouquets and are a treasured source of nectar for hungry butterflies. Black-eyed Susans naturalize well, so they are a great addition to meadow or wildlife gardens.

ALL ABOUT RUDBECKIA

Botanical name: Rudbeckia
Common name: Black-eyed Susan
Light requirements: Sun, part sun
Foliage color: Green
Flower color: Yellow, orange, red, bronze, bicolors
Height: 1 to 10 feet
Width: 1 to 3 feet
Zones: 3–11



LEFT Turn on the lights in a sunny backyard border with a mass of rudbeckia. ABOVE Rudbeckia ranges from single to petal-packed double flowers. OPPOSITE Black-eyed Susans and ornamental grasses make a gorgeous combo.

VARIETIES



POT OF GOLD
Large flowers on upright plants



MOROCCAN SUN
Multicolor double flowers



HENRY EILERS
Thin-petaled flowers smother tall plants



LITTLE HENRY
A shorter version of Henry Eilers



SONORA
Petals are tipped in yellow; grow as an annual



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Great cut flower
- Easy care
- Deer resistant
- Drought tolerant
- Ideal for containers

PLANT
EXTRA FOR
BOUQUETS!



INDIAN SUMMER

Golden flowers, grow as an annual



TIGER EYE

Produces tons of blooms; mildew resistant



GOLDRUSH

Bold yellow double-blooms



MORENO

Dwarf plant with chocolate flowers

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties: Ball Horticultural Company, Terra Nova Nurseries; Opposite left: Greg Ryan and Sally Beyer; Opposite right: Ball Horticulture Company; Left: Adam Gibbs/KAC Productions Productionswildflowerfarm.com

SHORT
HEIGHT

MEDIUM
HEIGHT

SUMMER
BLOOMS

Salvia

If you love blue in the garden, you'll want to meet the versatile members of the perennial salvia family.

Salvias are a large and diverse plant group of perennials, annuals, and herbs—there are more than 500 varieties. The salvia family includes sages and several types of culinary sage (which are perennial). But for flower gardeners, the top salvias are those perennials that produce spires of upright flowers in blue, purple, and pink. Blue is a particularly lovely shade in the garden, offering cooling tones on hot days. And the blue hues of many salvias are spectacularly vibrant—almost glowy. For gardeners interested in low maintenance, salvia is a good choice because these perennials are generally drought tolerant. And a big plus for gardeners who are afflicted by deer damage: Salvias generally remain untouched by these grazing herbivores.



ALL ABOUT SALVIA

Botanical name: Salvia

Common name: Sage

Light requirements: Sun

Foliage color: Green, variegated

Flower color: Blue, purple, rose, pink

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Width: 1 to 3 feet

Zones: 5–9

LEFT New Dimension Rose salvia offers masses of rosy spires. ABOVE 'Blue Marvel' produces the largest flowers of all *Salvia nemorosas*. OPPOSITE Salvias thrive happily in dry conditions and are ideal plants for hillsides or slopes.

VARIETIES



BLUE HILL

True blue and a profuse bloomer



BLUE MARVEL

Produces the largest flowers of all the salvias



BURGUNDY CANDLES

Grows 2 feet tall; taller than other salvias



NEW DIMENSION ROSE

Rose-pink flowers on purple stems



FRIESLAND PINK

Rosy spires attract butterflies



STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant
- Deer resistant
- Nectar producers

PHOTOGRAPHS Varieties and left page: Ball Horticultural Company; Left: Holly Lepere/Lepere Studio



MAY NIGHT

Tall spires of indigo blooms; ideal cut flower



LYRICAL WHITE

Robust plants love the heat; larger flower spikes



LYRICAL SILVERTONE

Sky-blue flowers with silver overtones



PATIO LILAC

Compact, well-branched, vigorous



TRICOLOR SAGE

Ornamental herb with variegated leaves



Sedum

Textural, sculptural, and oh-so-easy, sedums are the darlings of gardens, containers, and green rooftops.

Sedums are so adaptable that you'll want several types in your garden. Low-growing varieties can be planted as virtual mats of bloom or tucked in around stepping-stones on a path (they won't, however, take foot traffic). There are intrepid types that can grow between stones in a wall or rock garden that also excel as edging plants along a garden path. And there are taller species that can grow 3 feet tall and make wonderful cut flowers. Sedums generally have fleshy leaves, and their nectar-rich flowers are magnets for bees and other pollinators. Sedums are drought tolerant, hardy, and require little care. They thrive in full sun and like soil with good drainage.

ALL ABOUT SEDUM

Botanical name: Sedum
Common name: Stonecrop
Light requirements: Sun, part sun
Foliage color: Green, yellow, red, pink, chartreuse

Flower color: Red, russet, pink, yellow, white
Height: 3 inches to 3 feet
Width: Depends on variety
Zones: 3-9

Yellow-flowering 'Spirit' sedum makes a great edging plant.

STRENGTHS & BENEFITS

- Super groundcover
- Four-season appeal
- Grows in containers
- Easy care
- Drought tolerant

VARIETIES



**ANGELINA
SEDUM RUPESTRE**
Chartreuse, needle-like foliage; use in pots



AUTUMN JOY
Blooms open pink and mature to copper



**BLUE SPRUCE
SEDUM REFLEXUM**
Green-blue leaves; yellow flowers



**SALSA VERDE
SEDUM MAKINOI**
Low growing; very drought tolerant



**ATHOUM
SEDUM ALBUM**
Plump leaves are red-tipped in summer



CHERRY TART
Cherry-red foliage and pink flowers



ELINE
Green leaves have striking purple veins



**FROSTED FIRE
SEDUM HYBRIDA**
White-edged leaves; rosy blooms



**TRICOLOR
SEDUM SPURIUM**
Creeping variegated leaves; pink flowers

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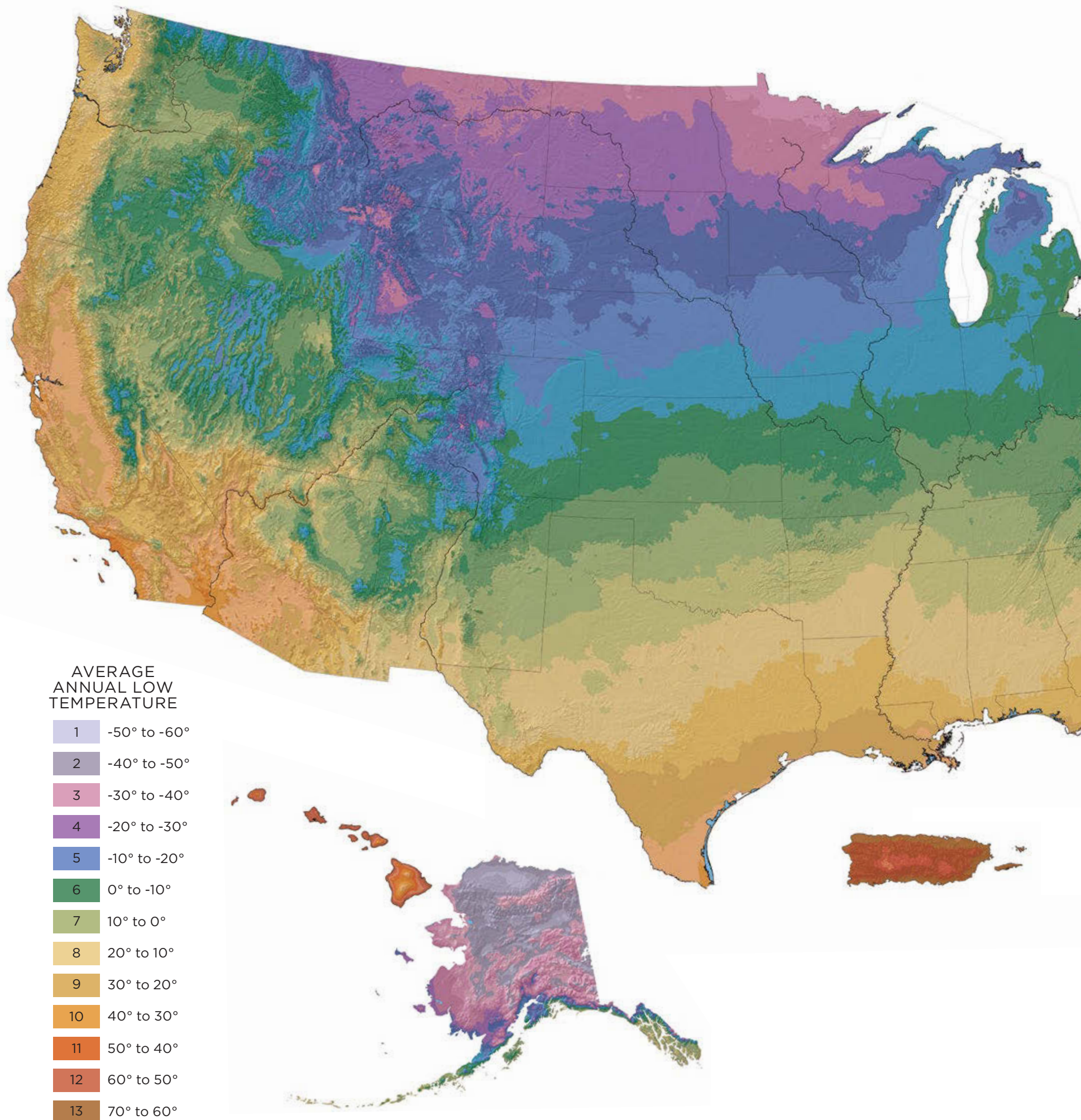
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USDA Zone Map

As handy as a GPS is for drivers, the USDA Hardiness Zone Map helps navigate gardeners and landscapers in the right direction.



ZONES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Keep zones in mind when selecting plants for your yard and garden.

WHAT IT IS

The USDA map divides North America by color bands into separate climate zones, each 10 degrees Fahrenheit warmer or colder in an average winter than in the adjacent zone.

WHAT IT ISN'T

Although the zone map is updated regularly, it's based on winter's cold temperature, and does not incorporate summer heat, humidity levels, snowcover effects or rainfall.

GET MOBILE

Access the map from your computer or mobile device while plant shopping. An interactive version is available at planthardiness.ars.usda.gov. Try an app such as Climate Wise™ Plant Hardiness Zone Finder.

CONSULT THE EXPERTS

For best results, consult plant guides, fellow local gardeners, and established nurseries in addition to the map.

BE WEATHER WISE

Hardiness Zone maps are guides, not hard-and-fast rules. They are based on average lowest temperatures in a region, not the lowest possible temperature, so be aware that plants rated hardy for a specific zone may not survive in a colder-than-normal winter. Keep in mind, too, that microclimates can exist within your area that may allow for planting outside your normal hardiness zone.

Perennial Gardening Resources

Create the garden of your dreams with plants and supplies from perennial experts.

Mail-Order Plants

Shop for perennials in your local garden centers and mass merchants or order plants online from perennial mail-order companies. Here are some of our favorites.

B&D Lilies
360/765-4341
bdlilies.com
lilybulb.com

Bluebird Nursery, Inc
800/356-9164
bluebirdnursery.com

Bluestone Perennials
800/852-5243
bluestoneperennials.com

Gilbert H. Wild and Son
888/449-4537
gilberthwild.com

High Country Gardens
800/925-9387
highcountrygardens.com

Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm
and Nursery
800/553-3715
songsparrow.com

Kurt Bluemel, Inc
800/498-1560
kurtbluemel.com

Schreiner's Iris Gardens
800/525-2367
schreinersgardens.com

Wayside Gardens
800/845-1124
waysidegardens.com

White Flower Farm
800/503-9624
whiteflowerfarm.com

Tools & Supplies

Shop for gardening tools and supplies in your local garden centers or gather what you need from mail-order companies.

A.M. Leonard
800/543-8955
amleo.com

Gardeners Supply
888/833-1412
gardeners.com

Gardens Alive!
513/354-1482
gardensalive.com

PERENNIAL GARDEN CHECKLIST

Early Spring

- ☐ Start perennial seeds.
- ☐ Plant early perennials.
- ☐ Pull back mulch from around emerging perennials.
- ☐ Cut back grasses to allow new growth.
- ☐ Clean pots.

Spring

- ☐ Fertilize perennials.
- ☐ Plant new perennials.
- ☐ Add mulch around newly planted perennials.
- ☐ Divide perennials.
- ☐ Clear off garden.
- ☐ Compost debris.
- ☐ Pick flowers for bouquets.

Summer

- ☐ Water perennials.
- ☐ Remove faded blooms.
- ☐ Watch for pest damage; respond accordingly.
- ☐ Pick flowers for bouquets.

Autumn

- ☐ Plant new perennials.
- ☐ Divide perennials.
- ☐ After frost, cut back all perennials, except grasses, to ground.
- ☐ Add thick layer of mulch (including fallen leaves) around base of perennials.

Winter

- ☐ If dry, water perennials thoroughly until ground freezes.
- ☐ Wrap tender perennials.
- ☐ Bring tender perennials indoors.
- ☐ Bring potted perennials into protected area.



Seasonal Care Checklist

Keep your garden looking its best with these seasonal tips.



PHOTOGRAPHS Doug Jimerson

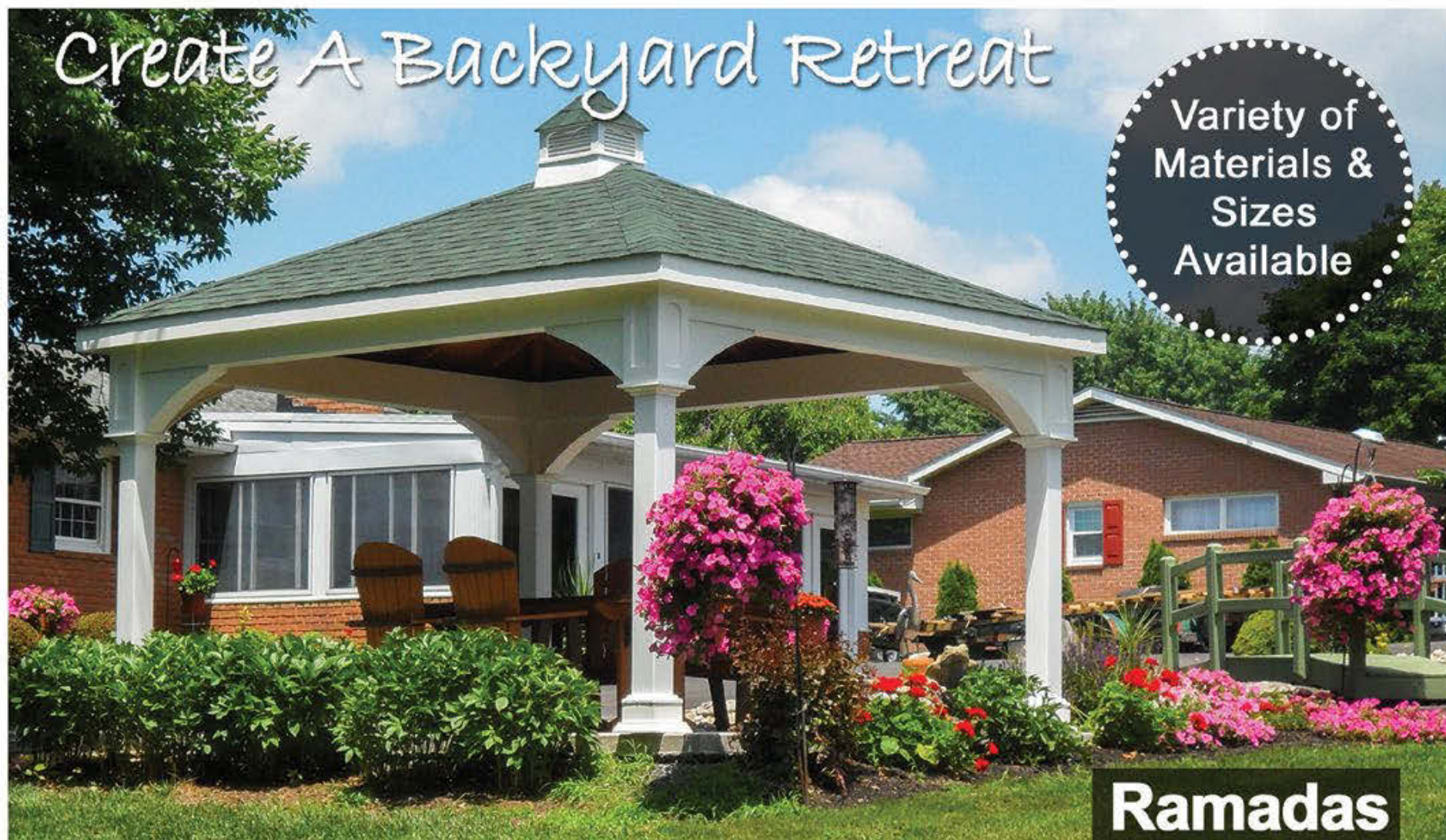


ABOVE In the fall, remove all dead perennial foliage. Compost all the garden debris to create nutrient-rich compost for next year's garden.

LEFT Use pruning shears to cut back perennials to a height of 2 to 3 inches before winter.

Create A Backyard Retreat

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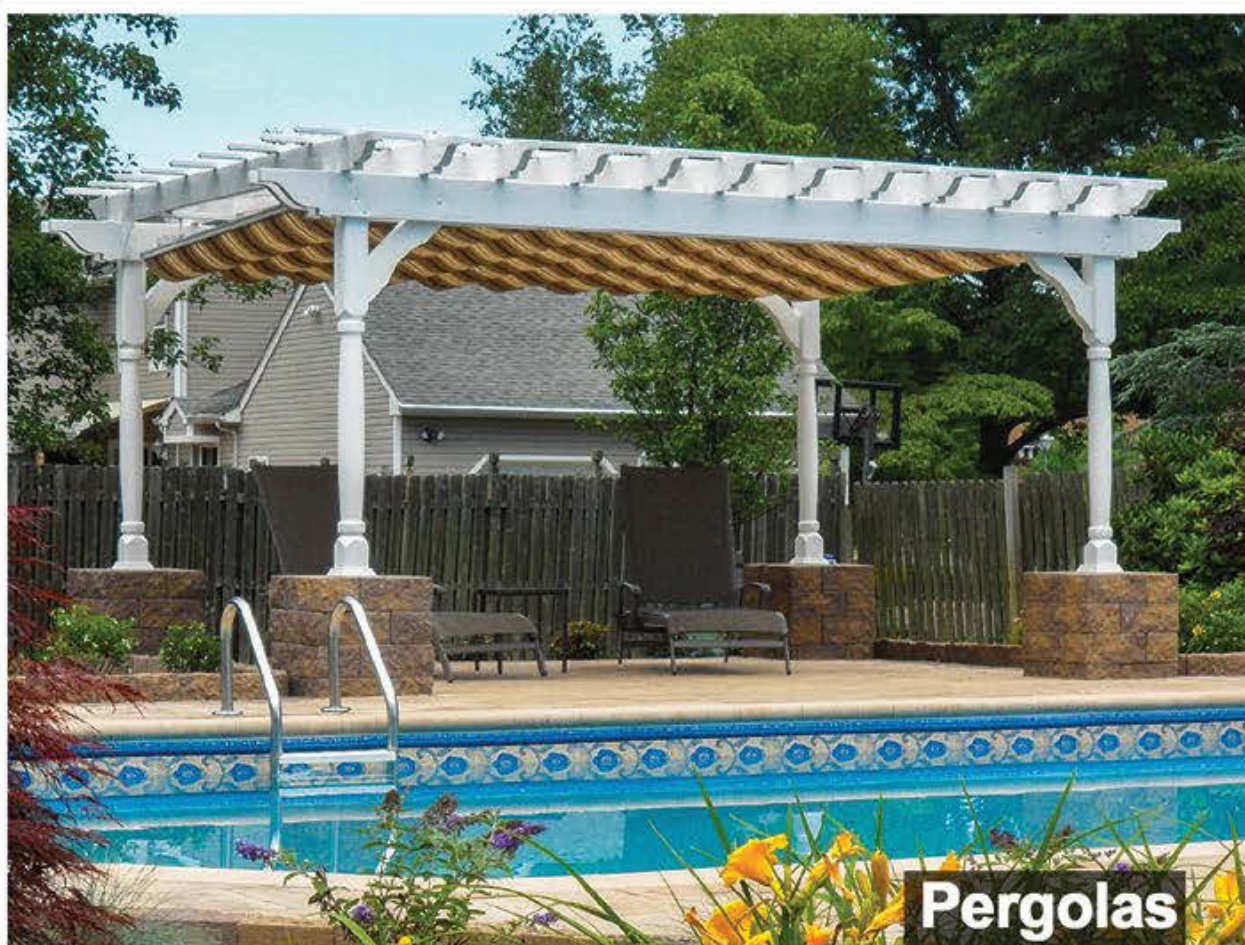
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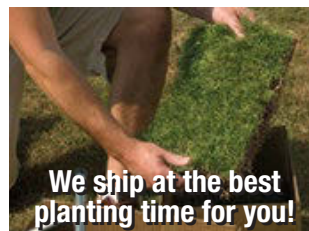
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